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FIRST THINGS

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

Social Ethics in a Post-Socialist World
Peter L. Berger

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Opinions and Reviews: Homosexuals in the Military
Amy L. Sherman • George A. Tobin • Alan L. Mittleman
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James Finn • Matthew Berke

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Richard John Neuhaus

The Public Square

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

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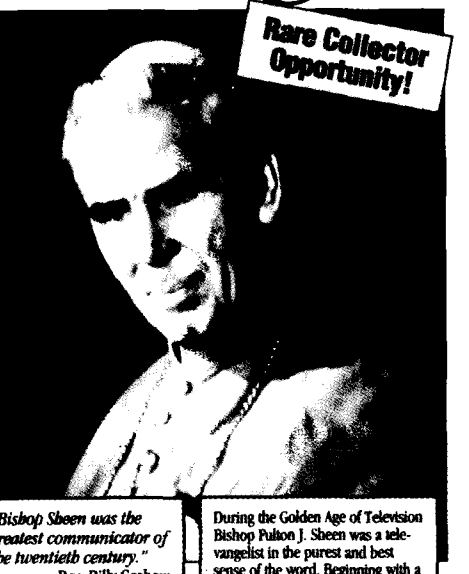
"Life Is Worth Living!"

The Wit and Wisdom of FULTON J. SHEEN



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FIRST THINGS

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

FEBRUARY 1993 • NUMBER 30

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FIRST THINGS

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Correspondence

Abortion Wars (cont.)

I read "Abortion and a Nation at War" in your October 1992 issue with interest, and might have found it persuasive if I had an open mind on the subject. But I do not have an open mind on the subject, and don't see how any decent person can in light of the widespread misery caused by "pro-lifers" and their campaign to force unwanted children into the world. Talk of the rights of the fetus is silly. How can the unborn, with no responsibilities, have a right greater than that of the woman already here and faced with the heavy responsibilities that motherhood entails? Why is she at fault if she feels that her means will not let her adequately meet these responsibilities, and spares herself and the potential child a probably dreary future? Why should not the choice be made by the person most directly concerned rather than by the self-righteous busybodies who torment unhappy women at abortion clinics?

Your editorial gives away your own prejudice by references to "pro-abortionists." No one is pro-abortion per se. It is admittedly a choice of evils, and admittedly it can be abused, as when resorted to merely as a convenience rather than to escape probable future wretchedness. But you don't have to go to poor third world countries to see the hordes of unwanted children begging and stealing in the streets to get the message. There is plenty of misery here, for which "pro-lifers" are answerable, largely because of their policy of denying clinical care for poor women.

The arguments against abortion can sound very high-minded, and the people who present them clearly think of themselves as on the side of the angels, and yet, confronted by the wretchedness that comes from the success of their efforts, like the priest in the parable they pass by on the other side. . . .

I have yet to hear or read an argument that can sway me in my conviction that pro-choice is the way of righteousness.

John Cadwalader
Blue Bell, PA

In an otherwise illuminating editorial, it is asserted that "of all democratic countries, the U.S. is far away the most permissive on abortion." This is not true. Since the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Morgentaler* (1988) holding even relatively minor criminal code restrictions on abortion contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (on similar—and similarly spurious—grounds as those of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade*), Canada has been without restrictions on abortion. I suppose Canada remains a "democratic" country, albeit one wonders.

Ian Hunter
Faculty of Law
University of Western Ontario

Religion in Politics

FIRST THINGS misses the point ("The Electoral Uses and Abuses of Religion," December 1992) that the Christian Coalition is an historic alliance of evangelical Protestants and pro-life Roman Catholics. No matter what its name, it would be known as a *Christian* coalition because that's what it is.

We must get over our fear that using religious terms in political discourse will corrupt them. Should we drop words such as peace, hope, and love in political contexts because their religious meaning might be obscured?

Unlike the political activities of Church officials, an independent coalition of Christians need not politicize the Church. (Pat Robertson is no longer a member of the clergy.) Concrete political actions have an ambiguity that may make the theologically-minded uneasy, but we should not let that stop us from returning religion to the public square.

Ralph Gillmann
Burke, VA

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Holding Marriages Together

In "On Marrying, Again" (November 1992), Kari Jenson Gold presents two worlds: "the dark, always vulnerable world of private thought," and the "bright and clarity-filled world of action." At 22, she passionately believed the second, public world could enable spouses to keep their marriage vows, which they brought from private dark to communal light. No more. The public light has faded, with the disappearance of all communal absolutes. And Gold's belief has faded, too.

Gold's two worlds are not enough. She has missed from the start that large, transcendent world in which God shines forth, the source of any light we have. Her absolutes have disappeared because they were grounded in a changeful world. Accusing our culture of using Christianity's language without its substance, she does the same, speaking of judgment and forgiveness only in terms of *societal* judgment and forgiveness, which, indeed *have* passed away in this guilt-erasing culture. But what if our absolutes are connected to a real, eternal Person who always judges and forgives according to his mercy and grace? Then, although battered by difficult relationships and confused by shifting public values, we might discover that we are still connected to the God in whom and by whom and through whom all things hold together. There is, indeed, a still point in this turning world, who grounds these moral convictions of ours in permanent and personal ways. But to find this still point, we must look to a larger world than that of ourselves or of purely human society.

Otherwise we will be left only with Gold's meager hope that marriage and all of morality might somehow survive the ravages of culture. The prayer for grace with which she closes must fly farther than she seems to send it: to the God who make us and who alone will enable us to obey him.

Niel and Kathleen Nielson
Wheaton, IL

Kari Jenson Gold replies:
I can find nothing much to disagree with in the Nielsons' response, except that they seem to have missed the point. My essay was, in fact, an argument for the inevitable and complete reliance upon God. But what God chooses to make of me—of us—is up to him (it has certainly not been what I'd anticipated), and many a marriage apparently grounded in Christian or Jewish faith has foundered, even as some marriages thrive without benefit of any religion. One might, of course, say that my confidence in myself and hope in the world were always misguided, indeed sinful, but surely we must always strive for a better and more faithful creation, and lament when we fall short. Understanding that what comes of the world is finally up to God does not free us from responsibilities now. Indeed, it frees us to work harder.

The Sins of the Common Law

Mary Ann Glendon's article, "Tradition and Creativity in Culture and Law" (November 1992), gives a mostly abstract and noetic explication of British common law, and does not take up the matter of common law as history, as it has affected the politics of the British people and others who experienced it in the political and social life of Britain and Ireland for centuries. The pragmatic effects of common law are what ultimately define it, not the notions of the academy.

What we have had in British political life under British common law is a procrustean class system, one of the most fixed in the world, confirming aristocratic and plutocratic class rule, rigidly preventing the overwhelming numbers of the lower class from gaining equality, representation in government, decent working conditions, the right to union organization, suffrage, and acceptable living standards until the end of the nineteenth century. What is patent in the law in England is the effort of the jurists and parliamentarians to maintain the status quo and upper-class status and privilege until the industrial revolution, when the lower classes were eventually able to win the franchise and some [place] for themselves in governance after years of effort and much resistance. Common law did not serve the common good well.

We have one of many flagitious examples in Ireland as point. In the seventeenth century British law imposed penal laws on the Irish people, laws whose intent was to destroy the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland as had been done in England and Scotland and Wales. Edmund Burke declared these laws to be "as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." These laws were in effect for over 200 years until Catholic Emancipation in 1829.

In Britain itself, there devolped a society based on class, countenanced in law, wherein two societies existed, totally separated, one rich, the other poor and deprived. . . .

Law in itself is necessary, good, and salutary for the individual human being to exist in security in society. Its end is the common good. To that purpose it has enabled British people to live together in a British government. But the law has not been a perfect modality, nor does it result in total justice and without fault. It has been full of inequities and inequalities and disabilities. Therefore, it is necessary from time to time to change the law to improve it to suit the needs of the times and the people since different individuals and different generations see things differently, and for reasons of justice.

Those who support the thesis that the law is power and preference and command have much to sustain them in British history and the history of other countries as well.

John Branigan
Staten Island, NY

Self-Deconstruction

Gertrude Himmelfarb's splendid article ("Tradition and Creativity in

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the Writing of History," November 1992) includes this statement: "The political theorist William Dunning said that one of the happiest days of his life was when he discovered, by a comparison of handwriting, that Andrew Jackson's first message to Congress was actually drafted by George Bancroft." Bancroft drafted the first message to Congress of Andrew *Johnson*, not Andrew Jackson. Most likely this is a mere typo, yet an unfortunate one, given the nature and purpose of the article.

Albert Castel
Professor Emeritus of History
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, MI

Gertrude Himmelfarb replies: Professor Castel is, of course, right; it should have been Andrew Johnson, not Andrew Jackson. My unconscious was obviously avenging my critique of deconstruction by deconstructing my own text.

The Providence of Books

"It is sometimes given to us, this lovely emptiness, and then the Holy Spirit can fill it. . . ."
Madeleine L'Engle

. . . and it happens, too,
when words upon the printed page
fall into place,
and fit the moment and the heart
and, by undivided Grace,
what lies within,
what lies without,
converges into deepest sight.
In this depth
and breadth and height,
the outworn self evaporates.
Its hidden fears
and petty hatreds all abate.
For across that lovely emptiness,
the Voice behind all voices sings,
beckons us, and flings
His joyful laughter up
against the gates of Paradise
and, for a moment,
swings them wide once more.

Stephanie Weller Hanson

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Opinion

Where You Lead I Will Follow?

Amy L. Sherman

Several observers have pointed out the increasing gap in social and political attitudes and theological commitments between the leadership and the laity of the oldline/mainline churches. The average Episcopalian, Methodist, or Presbyterian in the pew, the studies show, tends to be more theologically orthodox and socially and politically conservative than the average bureaucrat at the New York denominational headquarters.

On the whole, evangelical denominations have not experienced a similar alienation between laity and leadership. But a recent study by the Center for Survey Research (CSR) at the University of Virginia for *Stewardship Journal* suggests that some significant differences are emerging between the leaders of evangelical relief and development (R&D) agencies and their donor constituencies.

Unlike the gap within the oldline churches, evangelical laity and R&D professionals remain similarly orthodox in their religious convictions. This shared faith, though, does not lead to agreement on whether and how that faith should be shared in the context of actual field projects or on how it should influence agencies' strategies for fighting poverty.

An earlier study of evangelical donors by CSR (on which I reported in "Evangelicals and Economic Development," FT, August/September 1992) aimed at identifying their understanding of the causes of poverty and the appropriate course that Christian R&D agencies ought to follow. A follow-up survey of 164 professionals from 80 Christian R&D agencies contained virtually the same questionnaire as the one earlier administered to the donors. The professionals, however, were allowed to share their opinions in their own words in a series of "open-ended" questions that did not appear in the donor survey. Their responses to one of those inquiries—about why it was important to educate Western Christians about development—suggest that they see themselves as leaders and teachers of the donor constituency.

Like the oldline leaders, a considerable segment of the agency professionals consider their lay brethren uneducated, miseducated, or in need of exhortation. They believe that Christian R&D groups have a responsibility not only to inform the evangelical community of the extent of Third World needs but also to persuade them that "they [are] very much part of the problem." Many believe that the materialistic, selfish lifestyles of American Christians contribute to poverty in the Third World and that the sooner people realize this, the quicker they will be able to "stop the damage [they are] doing."

These "persuaders" are influenced by dependency-theory interpretations of Third World underdevelopment, which is to say, nearly 40 percent of the respondents argued that exploitation by the First World countries was the most important reason poor countries were poor. These professionals thought development education programs should seek to show rich First World Christians how American economic policies and unjust international economic structures impoverish the Third World. When informed about the apparent gap between their views and the donors', this segment of agency leaders is not so much dismayed that they are not accurately reflecting their donors' opinions as they are upset that the donors haven't come around to their way of thinking.

The persuaders' perception of evangelical donors as "unenlightened" with respect to neocolonialist understandings of North-South relations is largely accurate. Donor respondents overwhelmingly rejected the notion that the poor countries were poor because the rich countries were rich. Rather, the majority believed less developed countries (LDCs) were poor primarily because of misguided and corrupt political and economic structures inside the LDCs. Most others thought cultural and religious attitudes common to these societies served as barriers to development.

The potential leadership of at least the persuaders among the Christian R&D professionals is problematic, considering the weight of empirical evidence accumulated against liberationist diagnoses and prescriptions for the Third World's woes. Beyond this, many of them seem less consistent than the donors in their application of theological conviction and economic understanding to development policy strategy.

The donors' sense of an appropriate approach to help the poor runs something like this. Christian faith is extremely important, and agencies advertising themselves as "Christian" should hire, whenever possible, only individuals with a personal relationship to Christ. This is necessary because actual development ministry in the field should have a heavy evangelistic emphasis. Christian agencies should be deliberate and overt (though not offensive or coercive) in addressing spiritual needs as well as physical ones. Indeed, 88 percent of the donors agreed that "the *ultimate* goal of Christian relief and development ministry" ought to be to

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"spread the Gospel and convert people to the Christian faith." Conversion, in their minds, was not only valuable for its eternal benefits (almost all agreed that "the only hope for heaven is in personal faith in Jesus Christ") but also for its temporal rewards. Seventy percent believed that if a person converted to the Christian faith, it would help him lift himself out of poverty. Their rationale for this was not, typically, a "faith-health-wealth" perspective ("God materially blesses all who believe in Him"). Rather, most affirmed that converts who put into practice "biblical attitudes towards work and the use of resources" would experience economic advancement. Moreover, it may not be out-of-bounds to suppose that donors also emphasize evangelism because they think spiritual revival among individuals will eventually help influence positive reforms at the societal level. Recognizing that economic and political systems and cultural practices explain persistent poverty in LDCs, they might argue that personal conversion is a prelude to social reform, rather than the other way around.

Right or wrong, this package of diagnosis and prescription is logical, plausible, and coherent. The package revealed in some of the agency professionals' responses seems less so.

Like their donor constituency, the professionals hold Christian faith very dear, are active in their local congregations, and give generously to help the poor. Like the donors, the professionals overwhelmingly affirm that the principal thing LDCs need to fight poverty are changes in their economic and political structures and in their popular beliefs about work and the place of mankind in creation. Even more of them than the donors (76 percent versus 70 percent) affirmed that conversion to Christianity could help a poor person get out of poverty.

Nonetheless, the professionals were less likely than the donors to agree that conversion is the ultimate objective of Christian R&D ministry. Nearly 40 percent rejected this notion. They were also far more likely than the donors to believe that evangelism in the context of emergency relief after disasters was "insensitive and should be discouraged by Christian R&D agencies." Only 57 percent of the professionals, in contrast with 76 percent of the donors, agreed with the statement: "When Christian agencies distribute emergency food, medicine, and other assistance, they should also work actively to spread the gospel and convert people to Christian faith." Though two-thirds of the agency professionals felt that non-Christian worldviews were barriers to socio-economic development, only one-third thought that R&D agencies should work actively to change popular beliefs and values.

Agency professionals have more experience with and are probably more informed about development problems than the average evangelical donor. The difference between their views and those of "lay" people is explainable at least in part by the professionals' tendency to be more nuanced in their opinions. Most of the development professionals interviewed had worked at least ten years in this field and were likely to see the "greyness," complexities, and tradeoffs involved in ministering to the overseas poor. In short, out of their considerable practical experience wrestling with the problems of underdevelopment, they have something to offer lay evangelicals as leaders and teachers.

On the other hand, the direction in which some of the professionals want to lead—one that plays down the Christian distinctiveness of evangelical R&D work—is one many donors wisely do not wish to follow. They are understandably reluctant to follow that segment of the R&D elite that does not consider evangelism, conversion, and discipleship (as least as donors understand these things) key components of Christian development ministry. Additionally, donors may see the propriety, in our indulgent culture, of exhortations by R&D professionals against selfishness and materialism, but they understand that development "education" that consists of popularized versions of dependency theory is not likely to be helpful—either for rich Western Christians or for their impoverished Third World brethren.

AMY L. SHERMAN *is author of* Preferential Option: A Christian and Neoliberal Strategy for Latin America's Poor *(Eerdmans/IRD, 1992) and editor of* Stewardship Journal. *For further information about either survey, write* Stewardship Journal *at 745 Mountainwood Road, Suite C, Charlottesville, VA 22903.*

The Brown-Headed Cowbird

George A. Tobin

There has always been a segment of the American population that wants to dump the "Star Spangled Banner" in favor of "America the Beautiful." Proponents of the change argue that the present national anthem is too bellicose and misrepresents the warm and fuzzy people we really are. However, if we are going to embark on a symbol-revision program we ought to begin with a more important task—finding a new national bird. The anthem is not that big a deal, really. We are subjected

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to it only during sports events and late-night TV sign-offs. And even then it's only the first verse. However, images of the bald eagle are everywhere (not unlike the federal government it symbolizes). It's on our money. It's on postal workers' clothing. It's on seals and flags and buildings. Environmentally speaking, the choice of national symbol is ultimately more significant than our choice of pregame music.

The bald eagle is a lousy choice for national symbol on at least two counts—he looks warlike (thus offending warm-and-fuzzies) but is really a wimp species (which would offend hard-liners, if they only knew). Climb up and peek into an eagle's nest and the eagle will probably sputter weakly and flap off to consult with its allies on a safe perch somewhere far away. If you tried to climb up and peek into a great horned owl's nest it would most likely swoop in and rearrange your face before you got halfway up the tree. Even a hummingbird is more aggressive in defense of its nest than our national bird. And have you ever heard an eagle's call? It's pathetic. The only sound they make is a whiny excited burble and a neurotic scream. Woodpeckers sound more menacing.

Nor is the eagle a robust symbol of the work ethic and free enterprise. Most days our proud national bird can be found in many of our national parks mugging vultures to snatch a rotting muskrat carcass or beating up an osprey to steal fish. Not a food-gathering entrepreneur by nature, the current national bird prefers sponging off the efforts of smaller, more capable food-finding species whenever he can.

And how can we as a modern industrial people select as a national symbol a species so sensitive to everyday chemicals? A little DDT and a few other banal polyhalogenated hydrocarbons and instantly the bald eagle is on the endangered list—for decades. And even though the bald eagle has made an allegedly miraculous post-DDT population comeback, the malingering softy clings to the endangered list. Eagles can't hack noise, phosphates, or heavy metals, either. We need a national bird that can withstand the everyday toxins of modern American life, not some oversensitive eco-wimp.

It's time for a new symbol, a bird whose natural history and lifestyle reflect the emerging dominant American lifestyle. We have been stuck with the eagle since 1782, and I say it's time for a change. The bird that best reflects our changed America is the brown-headed cowbird.

The story of the cowbird is a resonantly American one. Eons ago ancestral male cowbirds probably gathered insects from the backs of the huge bison herds in the Great Plains and carried them back to their mates on the nest. In winter both male and female birds probably even plucked the undigested grains and seeds from warm bison manure as do other plains birds.

The attachment to the herd must have been very strong for these birds. But that attachment can be stressful because bison can wander great distances each day. The strain on a male bird could become enormous if he had to catch up with the moving herd, grab a bug or two, fly several miles back to the nest to feed his mate and babies, and then repeat the process. Some of the ancestral birds probably rejected the herd-following lifestyle and simply developed new feeding habits closer to home. But the ancestors of the cowbirds were more committed to their lifestyle. The male birds apparently decided to stay with the herd and simply stopped coming back to the nest.

The ancestral female was faced with a terrible choice: either be left behind forever by the herd and raise her babies alone or abandon the nest and return to the herd. The single-parent lifestyle has never been a popular option among bird species—the vast majority of avian species have some form of two-parent support system. In the end, she made the best of a bad situation by leaving her eggs in the nests of nearby birds of another species. She then flew off to rejoin the others back at the herd.

Luckily for her, those birds she selected were not very bright and the new eggs were not recognized as being of foreign origin. They were incubated and hatched and the cowbird babies fed by the adoptive parents. Even as each baby cowbird grew to a size and shape entirely unlike the adopted parents, the involuntary surrogate parents never caught on and continued to feed the cowbird as one of their own. Despite their stable upbringing, when the young cowbirds grew up they too must have felt the ancient call of the herd. They looked inward and then flew off to hang out.

The male cowbird has no parental instincts at all—his life is sex and a casual diet of bugs and seeds. He is more colorful and attractive than the female. His plumage is dark and sleek with a contrasting brown head and neck. The line of plumage contrast is located exactly where you'd expect to see an open collar and a gold chain on a human. In contrast, the female has a rather drab gray-brown appearance. Her life is dominated by the constant search for a place to unload her offspring.

Unfortunately for the cowbird, some bird couples tapped for involuntary surrogate parenthood aren't stupid and will recognize and destroy the cowbird eggs left in their nest or abandon the nest altogether when the foreign deposit appears. For this reason, evolutionary pressures have compelled female cowbirds to become more sexually active in order to produce more eggs to leave in more places—as many as forty a year nowadays.

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Not surprisingly, cowbirds are more flexible with respect to sexual relationships than are many other bird species. A few cowbirds actually establish monogamous breeding pairs. Some form monogamous pairs in which one or both parties cheat. But most remain entirely promiscuous. Loose mating territories are established in the spring but are not rigorously defended.

With the coming of European settlers and the massive forest-clearing that followed, the cowbird began to filter into farms, cities, and suburbs where it now thrives in great numbers—at the expense of those species who accept the burden of raising cowbird young. It is believed that the female cowbird will try to find a nest of the same species that raised her, an example of the well-known biological principle that no good deed goes unpunished.

The abundance of modern U.S. farms and gardens now gives the cowbird an unprecedented opportunity to settle down in fixed territories like other birds. But that isn't likely to happen. Where there are lots of surrogate parent nests available the males tend to become more promiscuous as more females concentrate nearby. Where there is a shortage of surrogate parents with whom to leave the eggs, the females tend to travel more in search of target nests and they then become more promiscuous as they pass through the territories of new males. Either way, the cowbird doesn't appear destined for widespread monogamy.

The scientific name for the cowbird genus is *molothrus*. This name was coined by the great naturalist William Swainson (1789-1855) after he observed cowbirds feeding greedily near cattle pens. It appears from his notes that Swainson actually meant to use the Greek word *molobrus* ("parasite or greedy person") but he misspelled it and the cowbird has been stuck with "molothrus" ever since.

I say it's time to elevate the cowbird to its proper place. What better symbol of our national character than the sleek insouciance of the brown-headed cowbird right on the dollar bill itself? It would remind us on each shopping trip that at the bottom of the surface of the American soul there is an abiding assent to the call of the herd whenever and wherever it may move, no matter who or what may have to be left behind. Someday we may indeed find our parking space as a nation and enter the mall of our destiny, but until then the cowbird best captures where we're headed and why.

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Social Ethics in a Post-Socialist World

Peter L. Berger

The title of these observations contains two assumptions—that now is indeed a post-socialist era and that there is such a thing as social ethics. It may be worthwhile to examine both assumptions with at least a measure of skepticism.

Is this a post-socialist era? One might reply yes on two grounds.

First, empirically: There is precious little socialism left—"real existent socialism," in the old Marxist phrase—for anyone who may want to reply no. This is not only because of the spectacular collapse of, first, the Soviet empire in Europe, and then of the Soviet Union itself, though that collapse is surely the single most dramatic event of this moment in history. There is also the rapid conversion to capitalist policies (even if not always capitalist rhetoric) of formerly socialist regimes and movements almost everywhere in the world. Populist politicians in Latin America, African dictators, Communist Party officials in China and Vietnam, Swedish social democrats—more and more they all sound like economics graduates of the University of Chicago, at least when they talk about the economy. "Real existent socialism" survives in a few countries, every one a disaster (North Korea and Cuba are prime cases), and in enclaves where one has the feeling of being in a time-warp (among, for example, academics in India or in the English-speaking universities of South Africa, or in some church agencies in the United States).

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Second, one might view this as a post-socialist era for theoretical reasons: Given the historical record of socialism in this century, one can say with some assurance that all the claims made for it have been decisively falsified—be it in terms of economic performance, of political liberation, of social equality, or of the quality of life. Similar falsification has befallen every major proposition of Marxism as an interpretation of the modern world. As a theory, then, socialist ideology today impresses one as being akin to a stubborn assertion that, despite everything, the earth is flat.

Why, then, the skepticism? Well, for one thing, it is always dangerous to project a particular moment of history into the future. In the 1930s an observer of the world scene at that moment could well have concluded that fascism was the wave of the future and that it was futile, and possibly even wrongheaded, to resist (it is salutary to read about the sizable number of Western intellectuals, including Christian ones, who urged their contemporaries to recognize fascism as the revolution of the century and, if I may use a somewhat more recent phrase anachronistically, who urged them "to get on the right side of history"). And, of course, huge numbers of intellectuals until the day before yesterday were apodictically certain of a socialist future. Clearly, one should be extremely cautious when seized by the feeling that one is moving with the logic of history—a Hegelian indulgence that almost invariably ends with a great disillusionment.

In this particular instance it is not very difficult to imagine scenarios in the not-too-distant future in which there might occur resurgences of socialist policies and ideals: the failure of neo-capitalist

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regimes in developing societies and/or the formerly Communist countries in Europe to achieve economic take-off; the insight granted to sundry dictators and despots that, while socialism invariably immiserates the masses, it is a very good recipe for enriching those who claim to hold power as the vanguard of the masses; the "creeping socialism" (still an aptly descriptive term) brought on by massive government intervention in the economy in the name of some societal good, e.g., there could be an environmentalist road to socialism, or a feminist one, or one constructed (perhaps inadvertently) with some other building blocks of politically managed regulations and entitlements; or, last but not least, the actual restoration of socialism, by coup or by voting, in a number of countries, beginning with Russia. For the last three years or so it has been fashionable to say that socialism is "finished." Let us not be so sure. Certainly, a rational mind has cause to conclude that socialism belongs on the scrapheap of history. But, alas, history is *not* the march of reason on earth.

With respect to our second question—Is there such a thing as social ethics?—the answer is obviously yes. There are, after all, programs with that label in academic curricula and on the agendas of church organizations. But it is nevertheless far from clear what this phrase is supposed to mean: Is there ethics that is *not* social? The morality of suicide and of masturbation are the only two areas that readily come to mind. Setting aside such hairsplitting, tempting though it be, one is left simply with usage. In that case, presumably, social ethics has been the intellectual activity through which Christians have tried to figure out the moral problems of contemporary society. That would in itself be a definition hard to quarrel with, were it not for the fact that in recent years it has come to be widely held that the final purpose of "doing" social ethics is to draw up a blueprint for a just society and perhaps also a practical guide for getting there. Leaving aside the far from simple issue of the relation between faith and ethics, and hewing strictly to the line of social science, we have to say that blueprints for a just society have typically been one of two things—either a set of propositions so abstract that they could be filled with just about any concrete content or a set of propositions that could indeed be practically applied, which applications have led to some of the great human catastrophes of the modern age. Put as an empirical statement: Beware of the prophets of a just society!

Socialism has been attractive to many social ethicists precisely because it is clearly of the second type—a concrete blueprint, based on an allegedly scientific understanding of the forces of history and providing some reasonably clear guidelines for action. Marxism, in all its variants, has provided the most coherent blueprint of this type, that is, an exhaustive analysis of the present, a fairly clear vision of the future, and on top of all that (especially in its Leninist version), a practical method of getting to that future. All of it, of course, has been a gigantic delusion—the analysis was false, the vision was deeply flawed, and the experiments of realizing the vision have exacted horrendous human costs.

But even if one were to assent to the view that socialism is "finished," one should understand that the womb that gave birth to this phantom is not barren yet. Vilfredo Pareto's distinction between "residues" and "derivations" is useful here. "Residues" are the persistent impulses and motivations of human behavior, while "derivations" are the temporary, fugitive ideologies and programs by which the underlying impulses express themselves at any given moment. In this instance, the "residue" is a deeply rooted impulse to create a perfect community on earth. Whether or not socialism is "finished," a crew of successor utopianisms are already standing in line. Leaving aside the theological proposal that utopianism is distorted eschatology, and idolatry to boot, we can subscribe to a perhaps more modest statement, to wit, that unless social ethics resolutely gives up any and all utopian visions, and not just the socialist one, it will again and again end up legitimating regimes and movements that perpetrate moral horrors. A Christian social ethics should begin with the premise that there can be no perfect community in this aeon, from which follows an enterprise of moral reflection that will be piecemeal, cautious, and open to revision.

It is a piece of folk wisdom, elevated to philosophical principle by Santayana, that one must understand history in order not to repeat its mistakes. The theological equivalent of this is the proposition that there can be no renewal without repentance. Generally speaking, neither the secular nor the theological version of this alleged truth is fully persuasive. Repentance is very often an exercise in self-indulgence, and sometimes the best way to move forward is to forget the past. In the case of the relation to socialism of Christian social ethics and Christian church bodies, however, it is probably true that history should be remembered and reflected upon, precisely because the impulses that moved it are not just in the past but very much present still.

And this history is not a very edifying one. Prior to the advent of "real existent socialism," that is prior to the establishment of the "first socialist society" in Russia, there was a certain innocence to the Christian infatuation with socialist ideals. One might even argue that this infatuation was defensible as long as the Soviet Union was the only empirical case of socialism—after all, one could

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blame its faults and failure on the peculiarities of the Russian case.

But the most intense infatuation with socialism in the churches came with the cultural earthquake of the late 1960s and early 1970s in the West. By then, there were many socialist societies scattered all over the globe, many of them with minimal or no connection with the Soviet Union. There followed a long and ever-changing list of socialist experiments, most of them in the Third World, each of which, we were told in turn, embodied some bright hope for a just and humane society—China, North Vietnam, Tanzania, Cuba, Nicaragua. The facts about these societies—facts about massive terror, repression, and economic misery, and, need it be said, about the persecution of Christians—were systematically ignored, denied, or explained away.

In consequence, Christian voices were prominent among those who served as mouthpieces and who created entire networks of political support for these regimes in the West. And although most Western sympathizers held no particular brief for Soviet-style socialism, their worldview did generally include the notion that the latter was morally equivalent to democratic capitalism. In this context the fate of the idea of "the church in socialist society"—*"Kirche im Sozialismus"*—in ecumenical discussions is most instructive (the idea, of course, was formulated in the German Democratic Republic under circumstances the unsavory character of which has now become clear with the opening of Stasi files).

Setting aside the question of how much real guilt there is in this sorry history and how much need for real repentance, the great need at this moment is an intellectual one: the need for a resolute cognitive reassessment. This reassessment should pay respect to the empirical reality, that is, on the one hand, the unmitigated disaster of socialism everywhere—economically, politically, and in a monstrous aggregate of human suffering—and, on the other hand, the relative capacity of democratic capitalism to lift large masses of people from abject poverty to decent levels of material life and to provide political regimes that establish respect for elementary human rights. This would mean giving up, once and for all, the endless rationalization of socialist fiascoes and the restless search for some allegedly different incarnation of "true socialism" in this or that obscure corner of the globe. It would mean accepting the fact that a market economy and a democratic polity, with all their demonstrable flaws, constitute the best bet, at least under modern conditions, for a modicum of moral decency in society. It would also mean an honest attempt to understand the actual workings of these two institutional arrangements—a market economy and a democratic polity—and their relation to each other.

It must be emphasized that such a reassessment would properly be a far cry from the triumphalism about democratic capitalism that (understandably perhaps) found favor in right-of-center circles in the last few years: we must be careful not to substitute a right-leaning utopianism for the left-leaning one of the past. The market economy and the democratic polity are institutional mechanisms that, with some luck, are reasonably efficient in securing specific goals, respectively, the creation of wealth and the protection of certain human rights. As always with institutions, new and unforeseen problems (both technical and moral in nature) appear as their products.

And, of course, there are a host of problems that remain untouched even when these institutions are eminently successful in securing their particular goals. To mention but a few, the problems of the relation between men and women, of racial and ethnic hatred, of the impact of modern technology on the environment, not to mention the perennial problems of human finitude and mortality—all these problems are common to all societies. The notion that they can be solved either by the market or by democracy, or a combination of the two, is fully competitive with some of the more grandiose socialist delusions. Still, it is certainly possible to engage in moral reflection about these institutions without either romanticizing or anathematizing them.

If, in this thoroughly unmessianic spirit, we turn to the moral issues of contemporary capitalism, it is possible to distinguish two sets of issues, broadly definable as macro- and micro-dimensional. The macro-issues are those that involve the society or the economy as a whole; the micro-issues concern individual sectors or organizations within the economy, such questions as business ethics and corporate culture generally. The latter are naturally of great importance, and do in the aggregate affect the larger society. But our interest here will be the macro-level. Now, on this level, it would be easy right off to draw up a very long list of moral issues faced by capitalist societies today. For virtually no problems faced by and politically debated within these societies are without a moral dimension, including very technical economic problems (such as, say, the prime lending rate or rates of exchange between national currencies). A few specific examples of such issues follow.

First, there is the question of the sequencing of marketization and democratization.

For the time being at least, much of the world is moving toward a market economy and toward democracy. Among those who participate in the post-socialist mood of triumphalism, these two

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processes are commonly seen more or less as two sides of the same coin. Alas, they are not. There is, to be sure, a measure of validity to the identification. It is empirically correct, for instance, that a successful market economy releases democratizing pressures—the children of hungry peasants, once they have forgotten the hunger, become politically uppity. It is also empirically correct that a market economy is the necessary, though not sufficient, condition for democracy—there have been no socialist democracies, for reasons that can be explained sociologically. But it is *not* valid to say that one cannot have a market economy without democracy. The empirical evidence appears to suggest that, while a market economy tends eventually to generate democracy (put differently, dictatorships tend not to survive a successful capitalist development), a market economy need not have democracy in order to take off.

Indeed, it usually doesn't. None of the post-World War II success stories in East Asia took off under democratic regimes, except for Japan. And Japan's original take-off was almost a hundred years earlier, under the Meiji regime—and *that* was certainly not a democracy. Two recent success stories in other parts of the world, Spain and Chile, replicate the marketization-before-democratization pattern. And if one looks at the formerly socialist societies in Europe, one may well conclude that an important reason for their present difficulties is that they are attempting to undertake both transitions simultaneously. Nor does the earlier history of capitalism offer much comfort to the reverse-sides-of-the-same-coin viewpoint. England, where it all began, could hardly be described as a democracy in the eighteenth century; neither could France or Germany in the nineteenth. The United States may be the comforting exception. There are also some comforting cases in the more recent period—for example, Sri Lanka, or Pakistan in the 1960s. But on the whole, there is enough evidence at least to suggest that, if one wants to have both a market economy and democracy, it is better to have the former precede the latter—if you will, to have *perestroika* before *glasnost* (it being understood, of course, that Gorbachev had something other than full capitalism in mind with the former term, and something less than full democracy with the latter).

The reasoning behind such a hypothesis is not difficult to explain. It is safe to say that no economic takeoff can occur without pain. The pain, inevitably, will not be equitably distributed throughout the population. Initially, very likely, only a minority will benefit from economic growth. In a democracy, this minority is easily outvoted, especially if populist politicians agitate the majority that either feels the pain or, minimally, does not see any tangible benefits as yet. Mancur Olson has coined the useful term "distributional coalitions." By this he means vested interests that organize in order to get their slice of the economic pie by means of government actions. Olson argues that economic growth is slowed when these coalitions mature. In a wealthy, developed society such slowdowns are economically tolerable; in a poor, less-developed society a slowdown can abort the takeoff. Democracy, of course, gives distributional coalitions the free space to organize, to grow, and to influence government. By contrast, a dictatorship can more easily control those vested interests that seek to slow down or dismantle the government's economic policies.

The case of present-day China sharply illustrates both the empirical processes at issue and the resultant moral dilemma. It is not altogether clear whether what is now happening in China represents a deliberate policy of the Deng Xiao-ping regime or whether in fact the regime has lost control over what happens. In any case, what is happening is a capitalist revolution, especially in the south, unfolding rapidly under a regime that continues to spout Marxist rhetoric and that has, so far successfully, curbed any moves toward democracy. Ironically, this situation strongly resembles the situation in Taiwan when the authoritarian Kuomintang regime launched the capitalist takeoff there. The China story, of course, has not ended and the present economic course could yet be arrested. In large parts of the country, though, such a reversal would be very difficult. Guangdong province (a territory, by the way, that has some eighty million inhabitants) is rapidly becoming an economic extension of neighboring Hong Kong, registering one of the highest growth rates in the world. The prosperity generated by this economic transformation is creeping up the coast toward Shanghai. It is not unreasonable to suppose that eventually some kind of political liberalization will follow the economic one.

The moral problem in a case of this kind concerns the interim period, the duration of which cannot be predicted. One need not necessarily be troubled by the delay in the advent of democracy per se; though it is terribly un-Wilsonian to do so, one can, and in fact ought to, remain open to the possibility of the benevolent autocrat. The trouble, once again, is empirical—the aforementioned correlation between democracy and human rights. Put simply, dictatorships, much more than democracies, are likely to violate human rights. The key question for the sort of "interim ethic" called for here (New Testament scholars will please forgive the term) is how many and what sorts of violations one is prepared to accept. It is not all that difficult to swallow the absence of elections (or the absence of *honest* elections, which amounts to the same thing) as the price for spreading prosperity soon

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and widespread prosperity eventually (especially as democracy is likely to appear as the latter occurs). But on the other hand, genocide is certainly not an acceptable price. The real question is, where are the limits? Using tanks against unarmed civilians? Using them once only? Regularly? What about a network of political prison camps? What about the use of torture by the security forces? Occasionally? Regularly? And so on. The *real* moral dilemmas almost always get lost in current debates over human rights, especially if either democracy or the market or both of these are proposed as panaceas.

The second macro-level question concerns the range and the nature of political redistribution. It is clear that a market economy, once it has reached a certain level of affluence, can tolerate a considerable amount of governmentally managed redistribution. This, of course, is the basic lesson to be learned from the coexistence of capitalism with the welfare state. It should also be clear that this tolerance is not without limits. If political redistribution reaches a certain level, it must either send the economy into a downward spin (wealth being redistributed faster than it is produced) or dismantle democracy (to prevent those whose wealth is to be redistributed—a population which, as redistribution expands, will be very much larger than the richest group—from resisting). Now, it would be very nice if economists and social scientists could tell us just where this level is—one might call it the social-democratic tolerance threshold. Right-of-center parties in Western democracies perceive a very low threshold (each piece of welfare state legislation another step on "the road to serfdom"); left-of-center parties believe in a very high threshold, and some in that camp seem to think that there is no limit at all. What evidence there is clearly does not support either the disciples of Hayek or Swedish social democrats; but neither, unfortunately, does the evidence locate the tilting-point. Once again, a sort of "interim ethic" is called for, full of uncertainties and risks.

Paradoxically, the choices here are simpler in a poor society, where the amount of wealth available for redistribution is quite small. Perhaps a more accurate statement would be that in a poor society the choices *should* be simpler, if policies were to be decided upon rationally and with the general well-being of society as the goal. In fact, of course, all sorts of irrational motives are at work in every society, and what is bad for the whole society may be very good indeed for whatever clique of "kleptocrats" (Peter Bauer's term) is in charge of government. Still, the so-called "Uruguay effect," i.e., an expansive welfare state ruining the economy, becomes visible rather quickly in a poor society (though at that point it is very difficult to repair the damage). In a rich society the process of economic ruination is likely to take more time and to be less visible, with the consequence that the available choices may seem more free than they in fact are.

The moral problem here is, rather simply, to find a balance between economic prudence and the desire to meet this or that social need. Leave aside here the fact that some needs are artificially created and do not really arise out of genuine deprivation. Even when full allowance is made for this, there remain enough cases of real deprivation in any society to leave the moral problem in place. How much of a welfare state can a successful capitalist economy afford? How much of government intervention in the economy, not just for the sake of redistribution, but for any alleged societal good? Even if one is not a true disciple of Hayek, one must concede that the road to economic disaster (with all its ensuing human costs) is frequently paved with good intentions.

The moral problem becomes even more complicated. There are not only potential *economic* costs to political redistribution; there are costs in terms of democracy and in terms of the liberties of individuals, as well. The welfare state brings about an expansion of government power into ever more areas of social life, with government bureaucrats and governmentally authorized social workers peeking and poking into every nook and cranny of the lives of individuals. The purpose of all these interventions is almost always noble-sounding—to protect the public health, to assist children, the old, or the handicapped or some other underprivileged group, to safeguard entitlements, to watch over the expenditure of taxpayers' money, and so on and so forth.

The sum total of all these interventions, though, is what Bernard Levin has called "the nanny state," which reached its climax in the social democracies of northern Europe and which, of course, brought about a backlash even there, not only from irate taxpayers but from a lot of people who were fed up being interfered with at every turn by the agents of benevolent government. At what point, then, does well-meaning political intervention become tyrannical? How can specific social needs be met without aggrandizing state bureaucracy and depriving people, those with the putative needs, of more and more control over their own lives? In poor societies the question can be put this way: How can the most pressing social needs be met without risking the "Uruguay effect"? In richer societies the question becomes: How can one maintain a reasonably effective welfare state without succumbing to the "Swedish disease"?

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Third, there is the issue of the relation between economic development and cultural values.

Max Weber was wrong about many things, and he may even have been wrong about the strategic place he gave to the "Protestant ethic" in the development of modern capitalism. But he was almost certainly right in his assumption that some form of what he called "inner-worldly asceticism," that is, a collection of values that led to worldly activism and to delayed gratification, was necessary before a modern economic takeoff could occur. The Puritan entrepreneur was indeed a prototypical figure embodying such values. Contemporary evidence about the economic cultures of East Asia, of successful ethnic groups in different countries, or of the mobility of immigrants to this country all seems to point in the same direction: self-denial and discipline are virtues that are the condition *sine qua non* of early capitalist development.

Christian ethicists usually have no great difficulty in admiring and even recommending these virtues, also in cases where they do not fully or even partially endorse the theological and philosophical presuppositions of people who evince them (such as, for instance, Latin American Pentecostals, Muslim fundamentalists, or neo-Confucian businessmen). At the same time, Christian ethicists often decry the absence or the decline of these values in Western societies today and go on to suggest that, unless we return to the old virtues, we will go under economically; and in this they may very possibly be mistaken.

Contemporary Western societies, with America in the lead, are anything but self-denying and disciplined. They are governed by values of self-gratification and untrammeled individual freedom. From a Puritan viewpoint, of course, such values will be seen pejoratively—as expressing greed, selfishness, irresponsibility. From a different perspective, one may perceive them as joyful and liberating. Be that as it may, in this century there has been an ongoing progression in Western cultures away from the older asceticism. A quantum leap in this development came with the cultural revolution that began in the 1960s. The culture has become even more liberating in terms of the wants of individuals, more libidinally positive, if you will "softer," more "feminized." This cultural change has by now invaded significant sectors of the business world, of the bastions of capitalism. Thus far there is no evidence that this has a negative effect on economic productivity, at least as one reads the actual evidence.

This obviously poses a moral problem for those who remain committed to the older virtues. Hard work, postponing enjoyments, discipline, sobriety—all these components of the "Protestant ethic" may have been held to be good in themselves, but it certainly helped when one could credibly argue that adhering to these virtues not only pleased God but worked to one's economic advantage in this world, here and now. Conversely, there would be some embarrassment to many ethicists if putative vices like self-indulgence, sloth, and lechery could be happily practiced without visible ill-effects in the economic progress of individuals or of society.

But there is another moral problem if one takes the view that our "softer" culture will indeed harm us economically, both as individuals and, more importantly, as an entire society. This point of view regularly recurs in discussions of our competitiveness vis-à-vis East Asia in general and Japan in particular. We must change, it is said, or we will lose out in the international competition. Usually it is not so much our hedonism that is being chastised in this way (though that comes in for some invidious comparisons too) as our alleged "excessive individualism." By way of contrast, we are asked to contemplate the wonderful loyalty of the Japanese to their company and their fellow-employees.

Now, never mind how accurate this picture of East Asian economic culture is; let it be stipulated, for the sake of the argument, that the Japanese are all they are here assumed to be and that this does indeed give them a comparative cultural advantage over us. Do we really want to become more like them? Do we want the corporation to become an all-embracing *mater et magistra*? Do we want people to submerge their aspirations for self-realization in loyalty to an organization? Do we want employees to put the company before family? And most basically, are we prepared to say that the whole history of Western individualism, including its expressions in the American political creed, can be looked at as a great mistake? And, if we say no to all these questions (as most of us surely would), how much of an economic price are we willing to pay for this position?

There are no definitive or unambiguous solutions to these or any other moral dilemmas of society. There is not, and cannot be, a design for a just society prior to the coming of the Kingdom of God. Moreover, when we start to act in society, the overwhelming probability is that our actions will either fail or will lead to consequences that we did not intend. Sometimes these consequences will be terrible. For this reason, the first and last principle of any Christian social ethics must be the forgiveness of sins. But that is a story for another time. F1

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Generic Male, Endangered Gender?

Olivia Vlahos

"*Just like a man!*" The unspoken judgment trembled palpably on the airwaves as four powerful women—a television reporter, a Congressional representative, and two physicians—held at bay the lone male guest, himself a doctor. Women's health was the issue in contention on this MacNeil-Lehrer debate. Were sufficient funds being earmarked for researching ailments peculiar to women? No. Why did the longitudinal studies of coronary disease focus only on men? Was that fair? And since the makeup of both the medical profession and the government was largely male, could one really *expect* that women's concerns would be properly addressed?

In vain did the hapless male protest, in vain did he cite male-specific diseases with research unfunded by Congress, in vain proclaim his love for wife and daughters, nay, for women in general. The heads of his adversaries shook unforgivingly, eyes flashed, lips curled in scorn. "*Just like a man!*" Perhaps each of the females present saw fit silently to exempt her own husband from the categorical indictment. Judging by many attitudinal surveys, most women do—a fact that, even so, has had little impact on stereotypes currently in fashion. Never in history has the male of the species been publicly held in such low esteem, never before been given so little benefit of the doubt, not to mention understanding or sympathy. Since each of the gender roles is defined in large part by its opposite number, how do poor ratings affect the ordinary male's view of himself?

Pretty badly, one might guess. Enough to render him unsure of his gender role, awkward in it and resentful at having to be so. Fortunately, however, other definitions also apply. In any culture, members of one sex evolve their own views of themselves—what they do, what they are, what they ought to be—and they judge one another accordingly. Anticipation of judgment is often enough to keep in line the willful and wayward. Evolution of image, it should be noted, is usually accomplished by elites—those who write the books, who teach, who occupy high-ranking positions; those whose utterances influence the tenor of attitudes and behavior.

For English-speaking cultures of Victorian times, Rudyard Kipling's poem *If* captured the ideal role definition. His recipe for manliness included courage, self-mastery, singleness of purpose, nobility of spirit untarnished by hatred or lies. And he advised,

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Another English Victorian, Sir R. S. S. Baden-Powell, founded the Boy Scouts with similar ideals in mind. The organization was designed to train young males in a spirit of civic duty, in self-reliance,

Olivia Vlahos *contributed "The Goddess That Failed" to our December 1992 issue.*

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reverence, patriotism, service to others. The proper Boy Scout was, in addition, to keep himself "physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."

Unless a society seeks to repeal the laws of nature, role prescriptions must inevitably derive from biological dispensation. Victorian nursery rhymes convey the sense of inherent temperament. "Sugar and spice, and everything nice. That's what little girls are made of." And little boys? "Snakes and snails, and puppy dogs' tails." The restless energy characteristic of the latter is contrasted with the more sedate demeanor of the former. It was not in those times thought necessary to qualify and apologize: Yes, *some* little girls are born rowdy; *some* little boys are not. It was quite enough to note what was true of *most* boys and girls—underwritten, we now know, not only by anatomical distinctions but by those of hormonal pattern and cerebral structure.

Differences observable even among infants intensify with puberty, which for girls arrives in dramatic fashion. Unheralded and unbidden, the tides of blood ebb and flow. The male child's transition to reproductive maturity is far less spectacular and takes place at a later age. In many societies of small scale there is general anxiety that the event might not happen at all. Certainly not without help, without active human intervention. Among the Asmat of New Guinea (and as late as 1956), the father of a pubescent youth was in duty bound to acquire the head of a stranger. Never mind how he got it. This trophy would then be placed between the thighs of the initiate, tight against his crotch where it would stimulate sexual maturation.

There are other mysterious differences. There is the matter of birth, that most wonderful of nature's gifts to females. The most daunting and the most awesome, too. Certainly it was for men still ignorant of their own part in it. That there remain even to this day a few tribal folk innocent of the facts of life suggests what was once true for all. No wonder, then, that across time and place one can find a pervasive sense that women possess naturally a power that must be painfully earned by men. Men knew it. Women knew it, too. As an old Papago woman once told anthropologist Ruth Underhill: "Men have to dream to get power from the spirits, and they think of everything they can—songs and speeches and marching around—hoping that the spirits will notice them and give them some power. But we *have* power."

Women, it seems, are born; men must be *made*, must be carefully shaped to life's purposes. This is the message of the puberty rites, greatest of male religious celebrations. For there is more to being a man than the mere fulfillment of biological imperatives. An initiate must be seasoned to hardship, to difficult tasks and difficult decisions; seasoned to receive and transmit life's special meanings. Seasoned how? With pain. With fear. With abstinence. And always under the tutelage of men. Indeed, pubertal transformation is often explicitly phrased as death and rebirth. A woman may well bear the boy-child. He must be born again, *as* a man, *to* men.

Perhaps as an aspect of symbolic male parturition, the boy may be formally separated from the contact of women and given over to the long-term care and company of men. In some New Guinea tribes he must be nourished entirely on the special foods of men or, as in Australia, made to camp for years in the bush, a virtual outcast from society. There are functional reasons for separation and indoctrination. Boys in whom hormonal saps are on the rise tend to be volatile, impulsive, triggery with aggression. All this virile energy must be harnessed to the good of society and brought under the control of elders who have learned long since to master themselves.

In Western societies of other times, segregated schools for young males (especially the military academies) served to foster self-discipline, to transmit society's values through hard tests and trials. Camps removed from female distractions, separate organizations such as Boy Scouts, the YMCA, the CCC, were at various times quite consciously founded to achieve these same ends. Then slowly through the years and in a rush during the 1960s, Western societies came to favor unisex education, and nobody seriously attempted any longer to define the ideal man, to test for attainment of standards, or to tell the youth just when he had made the grade. Scouting went into a temporary eclipse. The military was despised. Few families needed a son's earnings to survive, so honest work lost its power to confirm adulthood. Even the need for fathers and male mentors was called into question.

No wonder that young males came to formulate their own rites and tests: How much booze can you hold? What risks do you dare? Whom will you challenge? How near crashing a car are you willing to go before turning chicken? No wonder young males of the underclass choose to segregate themselves from females in marauding gangs and find in crime, drugs, and the wholesale insemination of teenage girls the missing passage rites of manhood.

The marvel is that some young men of this nether world have themselves sought to turn the volatile behavior of youth to constructive social purpose. Despite the recent scandal concerning their founder, the Guardian Angels have created an initiation to manhood as well-suited to these troubled times as the earning of Boy Scout merit badges was to an earlier, more innocent, period. Through hard tests and trials, young males are transformed into

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protectors of the very people on whom they might otherwise have preyed.

Tests of the Guardian Angels or of modern military academies include bruises and exhaustion. In the primitive world there is also pain. Circumcision is everywhere the mutilation of choice, always in a ritual setting. Often there is more. Scarification, whippings, the insertion of bristles up penis or nose, of vomiting sticks down the throat, stinging nettles or ants applied to the skin, the removal of fingers or teeth. And always the question, "How much pain can you endure without flinching, fainting, crying out? Are you as brave as your peers? Braver? Are you worthy to be a man?"

But it is seldom in pain alone that manhood is tested. Tribal elders ever seek to measure the initiate's fortitude, steadfastness, and strength of will. Alone he may be sent to face the supernatural, to face witches and ancestral ghosts thought to be very near at this time. He may be consigned to the wilderness, there to remain sleepless, unclothed, unfed until the Great Powers grant him a vision of good or ill. To become a man he must learn to conquer fear. To become a man he must master the imperious calls of the flesh.

Hard tests hone men to hard tasks. What tasks? Why, those that enhance group survival and the continuity of its way of life. The tasks are universally the same, universally rooted in strength and energy biologically conferred. They are, moreover, so often foreshadowed among our primate kin as to suggest generic role. The male of the species must be able to protect and defend; must be resolute and strong; must, in the face of adversity, hold steady and endure; must, above all, provide.

Generic Male: The Protector. The young, the old, the weak, females of any age must be defended from dangers posed by wild beasts or strangers of one's own kind. To see savannah baboons on the move is to see this directive in action. Males are always deployed protectively around a core of mothers and offspring. Similar defensive patterns mark the migrations of human hunting bands. Being human, however, they have *things* to move as well as people. Household gear, the evening's meal, sticks of firewood as well as babies are all carried on the heads of women in the core group. The menfolk stride ahead unencumbered.

"Just like a man!" bristles the modern woman viewing a photograph of this disparity in burdening. She fails to notice that the men are armed and alert to danger, ready to do battle. Indeed, she may prefer not to notice since current orthodoxy decries combat in any venue. Modern nations are frequently exhorted by hopeful utopians to emulate the "gentler" cultures of the primitive world, nearly every one of which, upon closer examination, has proved to be more combative than was once believed. Truly gentle people inevitably risk being driven into arid wastes, if not extinguished outright, by those with better martial skills and the will to use them. Even the "gentle" chimpanzees, as Jane Goodall reports, wage war against other groups of chimpanzees. In their world as in ours, weakness invites aggression.

Where primal society remains untouched by modern times, the tribe that hopes to survive must train pubescent boys in defense and perhaps in offense, too. There war provides—as it once did everywhere—an organizing principle around which life can be patterned. And not just for men. Although tribal women seldom participate in war, they can and do incite it. Women of the fierce Yanomamo (a people who live today along the Orinoco River in Venezuela-Brazil) are, by modern standards, a browbeaten lot. They do, however, unite to provoke their menfolk into war. Why? Because they dread abduction by raiders and subsequent removal to villages far from the protection of their brothers. The best defense, they reason, is a strong offense. Even better is a reputation for invincibility. So they call their men cowards, brandishing the word like a machete. Stung, the warriors rise to seek battle. They can do no less and still call themselves men.

Generic Male: The Strong in Heart. In every culture females learn early the uses of the goad applied by Yanomamo wives. Consider this bit of dialogue used in the Disney film *Child of Glass.* A young boy and girl are about to open a cemetery crypt. She quails at the entrance and moves behind him.

She: Boys first.

He: What happened to Women's Lib?

She: What's the matter? Chicken?

Guess who goes in first.

The strong heart and the brave front are required of every man who wants to validate manhood. In the presence of others, he must be decisive and confident, a rock on which weaker souls may lean. Whether or not his hormonal batteries are fully charged, he must never permit himself to cower, falter, or retreat (unless his fellows are doing the same). The rules are strict and unremitting. Perhaps this is the reason why so many cultures provide safety valves, approved outlets for the fear, insecurity, weakness the individual male may feel but must never display.

Traditional Iroquois of upper New York State found release in dreaming. Dreams were believed to predict, to diagnose ailments, to heal, to uncover the secret places of the heart, to discover the wishes of Power Beings. Typically, individuals in fear and conflict experienced the most vivid dreams, particularly warriors who feared capture in battle and the ritual torture that would inevitably follow.

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Childlike, unable to interpret his own dream, the dreamer depended on his fellows, not only to divine the wishes of his soul, but to make sure they were gratified. Says anthropologist Anthony F. C. Wallace:

> In their daily affairs, Iroquois men were brave, active, self-reliant, and autonomous; they cringed to no one and begged for nothing. But no man can balance forever on such a pinnacle of masculinity, where asking and being given are unknown. Iroquois men dreamt; and, without shame, they received the fruits of their dreams and their souls were satisfied.

Many Native American societies reserved a special place—often an honored place—for men who chose or were directed by a Power to assume the female role. The French word *berdache* has been used to describe the phenomenon. Although the choice was, in some groups, sexually motivated, it appears more often to have offered an escape for those men who could not live up to the stringent demands of the warrior status.

Temporary cross-dressing turns up as this kind of outlet in a number of modern societies, most interestingly in Japan where the brave front has always been a rigid male requirement. Cross-dressing was a privately indulged fantasy until, in 1970, a local entrepreneur made it big business. He and his wife founded the Elizabeth Club, a successful haven for closet transvestites, all of them "typical married men" with typical lifestyles. It is stocked with everything necessary for the fashionable female alter ego. Habitués of the club told *Wall Street Journal* reporter Peter Waldman that here they could relax. Here they could feel light and carefree. Here they could forget for a moment the need to uphold the family's dignity. Here they could escape the judgment of their peers.

Although transsexualism—the phenomenon of feeling trapped in the wrong body—should probably not be located in the outlet department, it is worth noting that three times as many American males as females request sex-change surgery. What of the discrimination and oppression supposedly suffered by females in this society? What of the trumpeted disadvantages? The male changeling sees none. A woman, after all, need not keep up a brave front, and she may wear her heart on her sleeve.

Generic Male: Enduring and Steadfast. All animals compete as well as cooperate with members of their own sex. Among males competition is particularly keen and serves, along with other useful purposes, to keep genetic quality up to snuff. Primate bands, we now know, are by no means closed, inbreeding communities. One sex or the other—sometimes both—look elsewhere for mates. Female emigrés achieve universal welcome by males (though not always by resident females). Male newcomers receive quite another sort of reception. They can expect constant challenge by other males for rank and prominence, and female tolerance is not guaranteed. In order to remain in a chosen troop, the young savannah baboon must find and keep female friends and acquire infant "passports" to carry. With baby in hand, he is safe from attack.

Primatologist Shirley Strum, who went to East Africa to study female savannah baboons, soon found herself captivated by the males and their plight. In her book, *Almost Human*, she writes:

> The more I understood males, the clearer it seemed that they had a hard life. Where did their size, strength, and physical power get them? . . . They had to construct whole new lives for themselves after leaving behind all that was friendly, secure, and familiar. Once in their new troop, they had to recapture all they had lost. . . . Despite great effort and enduring patience, they ended up with less than females who had never left home and could command simply with a look, gesture, or grunt. I felt sorry for males.

The human male in a new school or job is often in no better situation. He must establish by contest and competition a place among his peers and adjust as well to the prevailing order of dominance. Subjected to abuse by a superior officer, manager, or boss, he must strive to keep his cool while taking heat. Indeed, keeping cool is essential if he needs the job, if others depend upon his having it. He must be steadfast under pressure. He must endure. Sometimes, after a day of skirmishing, he may go home to face yet another kind of heat.

In traditional America, the man with a shrewish wife was pityingly described as "henpecked." He could not, however, counter with force and still retain the respect of his peers. He was expected to "take it like a man," contain the problem if possible, and, if not, to escape often to the refuge of male clubs and male activities. Dominating women were then popularly described as "battle axes." They were believed to throw crockery and to wield a mean rolling-pin, aimed always at the offending spouse's head. *Maggie and Jiggs*, a popular comic strip of the 1930s and beyond, regularly depicted such a scene. It was an image with worldwide acceptance. Immigrant women of those days (and these, too, it seems) longed to acquire pliable American husbands with their soft hearts and open wallets. Immigrant men were advised by their peers to import wives from the Old Country; bold American women would eat them alive. The stereotypical

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American household of the 1950s, portrayed in countless television comedies, was built around a bumbling, well-meaning, permissive Dad continually baffled by his brighter and more manipulating wife and kids.

Today other images are purveyed, and men must endure public heat of a different sort. Once-bumbling Dad has become a brute, the perpetrator of violence in the home, the abuser of children and women who are helpless, defenseless, imprisoned in marriage. This is the popular stereotype echoed in the media, in the courts, and in the halls of Congress. Has Dad become a brute? According to many specialists, realities are more complicated than stereotype admits.

Although the incidence of domestic violence is up, not all violent acts are committed by men. In a controversial 1987 article for the journal *Social Work*, Professor R. L. McNeeley and Gloria Robinson-Simpson, a supervisor of mental health programs in Virginia, concluded that, in terms of domestic violence, ours is an equal opportunity society. The data are hard to come by, say the authors, because a double standard prevails. Men are reluctant to admit being victims of abuse at the hands of women. (Wives are more likely to admit their own violence against their husbands than the latter are likely to report them.) Men will not usually call the police unless weapons are involved or unless they are severely injured. And no wonder. When in April of last year reports of a new advocacy group planning to open a shelter for battered men appeared in the *New York Times*, they soon prompted a *Washington Times* editorial. It began, "If there's anything sadder than a battered woman, it's a battered man, and the saddest thing of all is for battered men to start whining about it." Take the heat, the editorialist seems to advise; rather harassment than ridicule. Rather play the brute than the brutalized. Be steadfast. Be enduring. Be a man!

Like domestic violence, infidelity has become a game either sex may play. Yet here, too, different standards apply. The woman with a philandering mate is considered the injured party and receives the pity and commiseration of her peers. The cuckold garners from his peers rather more scorn than sympathy. His unfaithful wife, however, is likely to become something of a heroine, her adventuring warranted by the presumed deficiencies of her spouse and her own need to play the field. Indeed, in just about any sort of male/female imbroglio, the female can never be at fault. Such is the decree of current orthodoxy. If a guilty verdict is inevitable, there is always the body itself to provide reliable extenuation. A woman may plead premenstrual syndrome, pre- and post-partum depression, menopausal madness, or just plain "nervousness" and expect a sympathetic hearing. No such biological excuses are available to men.

Is that fair? "No!" cries a chorus of wives who love their husbands and are thus disposed to charity toward men in general. Their unfashionable protests, alas, are seldom heard in any public forum. Their husbands may not even complain. Treated to feminist hatred and scorn, they may not express resentment. They must keep stiff upper lips. They must take the heat and endure. To do otherwise would subject them to accusations of fomenting backlash, of being "macho," of being—just like a *man*.

Generic Male: The Provider. Of all the basic tasks, this one is most peculiarly human. It seems rooted in the very nature of hominid evolution. From studies of fossil forms and the reproductive patterns of living nonhuman primates, physical anthropologists deduce that, sometime between four and five million years ago, our ancestors attained upright posture, very useful in freeing the hands to carry things: food, implements, babies. At the same time, upright posture and expanding brains required the birth of infants in a less complete state of readiness than those of other advanced primates, more helpless, in need of more and longer parental care. Hominid mothers were thus more burdened than their primate counterparts, perhaps more dependent on meat, which increasingly figured in the diet. Enter the permanent consort. In order to sustain their slow-growing offspring, the mated pair divided the economic turf. She gathered plant foods; he hunted; they shared. Each benefitted from the other's skills and strengths, and the babies thrived, growing ever smarter and more inventive.

The gender equation among primates is writ in body size. Male baboons are twice as large as females. Ditto gorillas and orangutans. A bit less difference obtains among chimpanzees. The operative question is not why these males are so large but rather why females are so small. The answer is a reproductive one. Procreation, lactation, care and carrying of the young constitute a tremendous drain on female energy. A mother cannot find and eat enough food to maintain decent size and offspring, too. Yet, in the few primate species given to monogamous pairings and equal care of progeny, the body sizes of males and females are more nearly on a par. The human sexes achieved this physical validation of partnership sometime around two million years ago, together with a pattern of food sharing unlike that of any other primate.

There are foreshadowings, of course. Chimpanzees like meat, and males cooperate in hunting monkeys and other prey. The animal bagged is divided among the hunters who themselves become targets of entreaty by other members of the band. Meat is bestowed according to kinship and popularity, and most females do very well indeed. One

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unpopular and therefore meatless female was observed by Jane Goodall to resort to cannibalizing the infants of other females in order to obtain her protein quota.

Meat is the most prized food among human communities, too (otherwise vegetarianism would soon cease to be a religiously approved form of self-denial). In all the wild places of the earth, meat is hard to come by, and hunting a dangerous and often disappointing task. So it is that tribal elders take care to train their young men, not only in hunting skills, but also in the techniques of fasting and sexual abstinence that will induce the Great Powers to take pity and reveal the elusive game. Although women's gathering typically supplies two-thirds of the diet in foraging societies, it is the meat that is prized and the work of the hunter that is praised.

"That's exactly how division of respect begins," complains the militant feminist. "They wouldn't *let* women hunt, would they? Just like men to want all the glory for themselves."

Was it a sexist plot in the beginning that kept women out of the limelight, or were more fundamental considerations at work? Biologists tell us that the tribe whose women hunt full time might well face extinction. Why? It has to do with fat. According to geneticist Rose E. Frisch, the female body must retain about a quarter of its weight in fat if it is to achieve ovulation. No ovulation, no conception. No conception, no births. The woman who runs off fat in the hunt will have the same trouble in cycling experienced by today's female athletes and female soldiers in basic training.

Are we to suppose that recognition of this basic truth dawned on some unwontedly brainy hominid? Did he then relegate the less glamorous but also less fat-expending jobs to women? Or might the primordial division of labor bear some connection, after all, to female inclinations prompted by physiological givens?

For a glimpse of possibilities, consider the Agta, a tribe of foragers and part-time farmers living today in the forested mountains of Luzon, one of the Philippine Islands. Here women are free to choose their own activities in the food quest but make choices quite different from those of men. Anthropologists P. Bion Griffen and Agnes Estioko-Griffen report that Agta men are pleased to hunt with their wives or in large mixed parties. Men use the bow; women hunt with trained dogs and a knife. Only some women hunt, however, and when they do, they always hunt in company—whereas all men hunt, are passionately fond of hunting, and often prefer to hunt alone. Not surprisingly, men provide the largest percentage of the game bagged. On the other hand, women supply the bulk of gathered and harvested food. These are Agta variations on primordial themes.

Few foraging societies of yesteryear could afford freedom of choice. Men and women performed quite different and equally important tasks, each essential to survival. The traditional Eskimo hunter could not bring home the bacon unless provided with the fur clothing, tailored by his wife, that permitted him to do his job in all types of weather. Because his was the more hazardous work, however, it is not surprising that the man became the job, his sense of self entirely dependent on his ability to provide. Such was the case in any foraging society. When farming came to supplant hunting as a primary source of sustenance and men adopted it as a full-time occupation, the old equation of man and job—success or failure—continued to apply. It does so still.

Before the 1960s American wives praised their husbands by calling them "good providers," and the ordinary working man wore as a badge of honor his ability to maintain wife and children without assistance. Joblessness wounded a man's pride as nothing else. Being a good provider often required a man to commit himself early to a calling and to stay in it until retirement, whether or not he enjoyed the work or was fitted for it. It was not only women who, trapped in household drudgery, were moved to cry, "Is this all there is to life?" Men, too, have seen their ambitions thwarted, their dreams scattered while they kept noses faithfully to the grindstone. Nor might they make public complaint. The code of the provider did not permit that.

Even today, when women are exhorted by their elites to put workplace ahead of home, to find true fulfillment in a career, their earnings (particularly those of married women) seldom supply a reliable core of family income because they do not work as much or as regularly as men. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, sociologist Audrey Vanden-Heuvel recently traced the history of more than 2,000 women through the seven years following the births of their first children. Only one-third of the mothers in her sample followed expectable choices: full-time mother and homemaker or full-time worker. The remaining two-thirds made nearly as many individual choices about the worker/student/mother combination as there were women involved. Fluctuations and choices were presumably underwritten by a primary provider: the man of the house. Such realities may not be politically correct, but they make good family sense. Part-time callings add up to most-of-the-time mothering for children who need it now more than ever.

Industrial and technological innovations have been opening up new occupational choices for

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Western women since the nineteenth century. And yet, all the while, and in a manner reminiscent of Agta gender differences in the hunt, preferences and specialties have reemerged. Look for a doctor in what was once the Soviet Union and one will discover that most general practitioners are female, most specialists male. In American medicine, fewer female physicians go into surgery than into pediatrics, gynecology, dermatology, and preventive medicine. Though the numbers of female attorneys, accountants, and financial managers are drawing even with those of their male counterparts, fewer women than men go into engineering, science, and math. In the trucking industry, fewer women than men own large rigs and are willing to undertake long hauls. Fewer women than men opt for a military career, and though female officers may demand the right to serve in combat, enlisted women express much less fervor at the prospect of frontline duty. Fewer women than men enter politics. Fewer women than men go into high-powered sales. And the overall earnings of women are lower than those of men.

Is that evidence of discrimination? Should earnings be equalized by decree, whether or not the same numbers of hours are worked? Should the ranks of female politicians, engineers, and combat soldiers be forcibly expanded? Should the relative rewards of occupations be determined, not by market forces, but by the arbitrary assignment of "comparable worth"? For feminist orthodoxy these are articles of faith. For the ideologically uncommitted, such prospects raise troubling questions. What happens to biological differences, they wonder, when work is allocated by the numbers? What happens to individual preference when equivalence is the order of the day? What happens to the pairs of opposites, bound together by their very differences and by mutual need, when even the possibility of gender distinctions in occupation is suppressed?

The primitive world offers some limited insights. One comes from a small area of New Guinea where Margaret Mead studied variability in male/female roles. She described the fierce Mundugamor, whose ideal male was "a lion fighting for his share . . . surrounded by several equally violent lionesses." Both genders were expected to be aggressive, demanding, the most successful of each managing to compete their less ambitious and weaker rivals into subservience. Yet there also remained a prescribed division in tasks, activities, and responses until Mundugamor women began to demand the right to initiation, a ritual formerly reserved to men. "It is not surprising," Mead reported in 1935,

> that Mundugamor ceremonial life has dwindled. The actors have lost their audience and one vivid artistic element in the life of the Mundugamor. . . . The sacrifice of sex difference has meant a loss in complexity to the society. . . . To insist that there are no sex differences . . . may be as subtle a form of standardizing personality as to insist that there are many sex differences.

With standardization, what happens to comity? What happens to the quality of life when mandated sameness forbids those reciprocal courtesies that once confirmed the mutual appreciation of men and women? It is already clear that success in erasing divisions of labor in America has not served to reduce gender tensions. Neither has the energetic application of female advantage in hiring, promotion, and college admissions. Ditto the careful neutering of job titles and the expurgation of the language to remove every possible insensitivity. The more that middle-aged, middle-class males accommodate to feminist demands, it seems, the more they are hated, reviled, and feared by so-called feminists. The battle has been won, but still peace somehow cannot be concluded.

Conflict may be dictated by structure. The feminist movement, after all, has institutionalized, that is, has developed, permanent organizations and media outlets. It is now a source of jobs as well as a quasi-religious ideology. It has found a secure home in higher education. And there are feminist attorneys, writers, editors, journalists, filmmakers, politicians. Feminist heroines are supported in style by feminist audiences on the lecture circuit. The paid staffs of feminist advocacy groups lobby Congress on "women's issues," every one of which lays claim, not only to public concern, but to the public purse. Organized feminism thus has a vested interest in escalating strife. New victims of the hated enemy must continually be found, new oppressors denounced, new and more lurid violations of rights uncovered. To do otherwise would be to commit institutional suicide, and no entrenched bureaucracy does that willingly.

So hostilities continue to flare, often in unlikely places: In faculty meetings, where the male professor who innocently utters the damning "lady" or "girl" can be howled derisively off the floor. On the road, where the female speedster can flip "the finger" as she passes a more prudent male driver. At the entrance to a building, where the man who opens the door for a pretty creature can be suitably shocked with a snarled obscenity. The usual objects of target practice are greying, gentlemen-of-the-old-school who wonder sadly, "What *is* the world coming to? Women used to be so nice."

And they were. Or if they weren't, they tried to be. That was what the prevailing image required. Alexis de Tocqueville, visiting America in 1830, conveyed the outsider's impression. American

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women, he said, were "happily bold." Compared to their European sisters, they were well and fully educated, were told everything about the corruptions of the world, and were taught to defend their virtue with a "masculine strength of understanding and manly energy." They nevertheless, he said, "always retain the manners of women." While there was not much maneuvering room in terms of occupation, respect for the individual female's mind and courage was high. Men seemed to feel that she *could* do anything she chose, but chose to do her duty instead. Her honor was held precious, said Tocqueville, adding:

> Such is the respect entertained for the moral freedom of the sex that in the presence of a woman the most guarded language is used lest her ear should be offended by an expression. . . . In America a young unmarried woman may alone and without fear undertake a long journey. . . .

Women were then considered morally superior to men and esthetically more refined. However much a gentleman in behavior and intention, the male of the species was, after all, fallible, prey to powerful urges. Men could be seduced by drink, by gambling, by a painted face. They could be heartless bullies, selfish, combative, and loud. They had to "sow wild oats" but afterward could be redeemed by the "love of a good woman." When Katherine Lee Bates wrote "America the Beautiful" and included these lines, "Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law," she doubtless had men in mind. Or rather, she had in mind the counter-image that men themselves struggled to transcend, the opposite of the ideal as defined by Kipling and in the Boy Scout creed.

And yet it is that opposite, that Caliban persona decried by men, that has appealed to feminists—so much so that they have willingly abandoned their moral pedestal in order to embrace it. No wonder the favored role model for many of today's young professional women is Madonna, the singing star who has given the term "slut" not only positive connotations, but a heavy charge of ruthlessness and power. Her iconography glorifies and exalts the feminist credo: "Anything men can do I can do better. I can beat them at their own game and on their own playing field."

Not all women are finding that so easy to do. Men programmed to accept gender equivalence see no reason to offer quarter on the playing field, no reason why they should not subject women to the same rough treatment they visit upon one another. Under such conditions, women usually lose. For in spite of the many films of mayhem featuring valorous female cops and starship troopers, no one has yet managed to repeal biology: most men are bigger and stronger than most women. Once upon a time, women knew how to turn male strength to their own advantage. By being physically weak but morally strong, women could claim protection. Feminist doctrine forbids that right and seeks instead a playing field tilted in female favor. Adjustments have also been made in the image department. Woman-as-victim has replaced the Amazon figure on the media stage. That switch has required additional accent on the image of man-as-victimizer. *Are* there more brutes today than in yesteryear? Believing and expecting may well have helped to make it so.

Nowhere has the ambivalence of image, the confusion in rules and roles, had a greater impact than on the college campus. In a venue where reasonable decorum once prevailed, where female virtue was (but is no longer) guaranteed by chaperones, parietals, sex-segregated dorms, and watchful deans of women, there is now escalating date rape and other forms of abuse. Much soul-searching has ensued, often in courts and other public arenas, and also between the parties of the first part, the college man and woman whose dilemmas of misunderstanding can be evoked in the following dialogue:

> *He*: I thought the double standard was dead.
>
> *She*: It is; I have the same right you do to express my sexuality. But I get to say "yes" or "no." It's your obligation to respect that and respect me.
>
> *He*: Some girls say "yes" and then change their minds. Some say "no" and mean "yes," and if we don't make a pass, they call us wimps. How can we know which is which?
>
> *She*: That's your problem.
>
> *He*: What is a guy supposed to think when his date wears see-through this-and-that and skirts up to *here*?
>
> *She*: That's not a come-on. That's fashion. I have the right to be fashionable. You have *no* right to leer.
>
> *He*: What if a girl visits a guy's bedroom or crashes a stag party she knows will be rough? What then?
>
> *She*: Tone down your party, that's what. I have the right to go wherever I please. You're obligated to make sure I can.
>
> *He*: What about booze? Suppose you're dead drunk and say "yes." Does that really mean "no"? Should it mean "no"?
>
> *She*: I have the right to get just as drunk as you do. But my personhood must be held sacred, drunk or sober.
>
> *He*: You mean, even if you're in no condition to know or care about your personhood, a guy is supposed to be responsible for it? Even if he's dead drunk, too?

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She: Absolutely.

He: How come you get all the rights and I get all the obligations? Sounds to me like just another double standard.

Implicit somewhere in the new sexual scenarios is a developing expectation that men will now learn to apply the forethought and restraint once considered a woman's responsibility. Are men expected also to be more in command of the flesh than females, better able to apply the brakes? Given the state of male hormones, that would seem an irrational expectation. But maybe not. Today's fashionable preoccupation with sex and dread of its repression is not universal. Many of the world's cultures (simpler, closer to the land, and therefore more "natural") do not hold self-mastery to be beyond a man's power, though it might well be beyond that of a woman.

Consider the traditional Yurok, a foraging/fishing people of northern California. For them the accumulation of shell money was a dominating goal in life. Couples normally abstained from sex the whole winter long. Why? Because hoarded treasure disliked hanky-panky in the house and would desert owners unable to wait until they could sleep decently out of doors. The man whose many children born out of season bespoke weakness of will was dismissed with the epithet, "Just like a dog."

Cheyenne of the Great Plains considered energy, including virile energy, a nonrenewable resource that should never be squandered in frivolous excess. Indeed, when his wife bore a son, the man of truly strong character determined to focus all his energy for a period of years on the child, remaining celibate the while. A lesser man, unable to master his appetites, might be pitied; he did not deserve to be a chief.

Some new sex education curricula highly contested in today's public schools press a similar message. Boys are urged to have confidence in their powers of self-control even when taunted and tempted by seductive girls. The value of deferring sex until marriage and taking responsibility for what children ensue is stressed. The new curricula have emerged as a response to the threat of AIDS and the increasing numbers of babies born to unwed teenage mothers, both problems that traditional forms of sex education have done little to abate. Unlike them, abstinence programs do not offer safer ways to do the same old things. Instead, they challenge boys with hard tests, inviting them to be more resolute than girls and other, weaker males. It is a challenge that may prove irresistible, especially at a time when the free exercise of folly bids fair to become not only fatal, but the ultimate bore.

Similar challenges are surfacing in other aspects of life. Quietly, of course, so as not to raise a fuss. A recent letter to John Molloy, author of the syndicated column *Dress for Success*, offers an illustration. An insurance salesman complained of sexism in his workplace. Women, he said, could wear sneakers to work any time they chose and get away with it. When he wore sneakers, the boss chewed him out, even though he changed immediately to wingtips. The boss admitted unfairness but insisted on the no-sneakers dictum; if the salesman couldn't understand, too bad. Wasn't that a double standard? You bet, Molloy replied, adding,

> but don't feel persecuted. You and all other men gain from it. Most bosses who are men insist that men dress in more businesslike style than women. It is their not-so-subtle way of announcing that they expect more of men than of women, with all that implies.

Will men increasingly come to define themselves according to their perceptions of what women are not? Will they be drawn to occupy the moral high ground vacated by women? Nature, it seems, enjoins duality, even in the matter of archetype and stereotype. The more women are encouraged by their elites to press for rights, the more men will be asked to shoulder obligations. The more women are taught to see the world through a gender lens, the more men will have to take a broader view. The more women are urged to kick over marital traces, the more men will value monogamy and family ties. The more women find the mother role confining and dull, the more men will be drawn to fatherhood. (Is it too farfetched to suppose that men may one day choose their mates—as women once did—with some view to parenting potential?)

The slow shift in image and roles highlights the significance of primal tasks, redesigned for modern times but no less essential to survival of a way of life in the children who are its future. Because those are the tasks of generic male, he is not endangered but merely in eclipse. And he may not be that when he ceases to see himself as feminism would like him to be seen. Not when he learns once more to judge himself and his peers by the standards of other, older times. As men seek their better natures, they may well manage to bring back into style those women who have never given up their own. Those "manly-hearted" women who decline to be imitation men and reject alike the images of Amazon and victim. Those old-fashioned women for whom loyalty, honor, duty are not dirty words. Those fair-minded women, glad to give generic male his due. When *they* use the phrase, "just like a man," they mean it as a compliment and say it with a smile.

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The Bible: Unexamined Commitments of Criticism

Jon D. Levenson

Ten years ago I had an experience that made me vividly aware of the two worlds with which the practitioner of the critical study of the Bible inevitably deals. Reading applications for the doctoral program whose faculty I had only recently joined, I was struck by the frequency on the autobiographical statements of a pattern that a form critic might call the "conversion narrative." Sometimes this narrative assumed a doubled form, first the conversion into a robust but uncritical Christian faith and then, usually in college or seminary, a second conversion marked by acceptance of the historical-critical method and an abandonment of doctrines of inerrancy and the like, though never of Christianity itself. At other times candidates narrated only a conversion of the first sort or otherwise gave an account of their lives that showed no awareness of the nature of the historical criticism of the Bible, the only approach that our doctoral program utilized. Worried about the suitability of such applicants for the program, I broached the issue to a senior colleague, who immediately sought to allay my anxieties. "Don't worry," he said. "A lot of our students start out like that, but they change after they have been here two weeks."

Eleven years earlier, the comparative religionist Wilfred Cantwell Smith had published a scathing attack upon the profession of biblical scholarship in the historical mode. Smith did not argue that the methods employed are in any way false; his critique was not predicated upon a confession of faith in the revealed or inspired character of the documents. His point, rather, was that by concentrating on the period of their composition, critical scholars neglect the assembled Bible and its immeasurable significance in the history of culture. "The analysis of a thing is interesting, and can be highly significant, but only subsidiarily," Smith wrote; "strictly, the history of the thing *begins* once its parts are synthesized." If he was right, then we must confront the salient paradox of historical-critical scholarship on the Bible: it ends precisely when the history of the Bible begins.

The causes of this paradoxical situation are many and complex. One is the tendency of some influential forms of Protestantism to understand Scripture in sharp contradistinction to tradition, even the tradition of the Protestant use and interpretation of the Bible. Without attention to post-biblical tradition, Scripture vanishes before our eyes, for the basis of religion in biblical times was not a Bible: the religion *in* the Book is not the religion *of* the Book. The prophets did not preach a book or show any awareness that God had revealed one to Moses on Mount Sinai, and when early Christian documents mention the "Scriptures," they are referring not to the gospels and epistles but only to what Christians would later come to call the "Old Testament." That in which the earliest Christian communities put their faith was not a book, but a person. The Book remained the Jewish Scriptures, there being in what some Christians call "New Testament times" no New Testament.

Within the context of those Protestant communions that emphatically set Scripture over tradition, therefore, Smith's order of priorities would have to be reversed: the Bible itself requires that its analysis take priority over its history, that biblical history be understood only as the history *internal to* the Bible, not the history *of* the Bible once it has at long last been assembled and standardized in one form or another.

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My colleague's effort to allay my anxieties suggests, however, that much more than a certain Protestant tradition of anti-traditionalism underlies the equally paradoxical tendency of critical biblical scholars to neglect the history of the Bible. For in all cases the applicants about whom I was worried were more involved with the biblical documents themselves than with the role of the Bible in post-biblical tradition. Indeed, exactly like those whom Smith castigated, these students were thoroughly unconcerned with the history of biblical interpretation within religious communities—with, that is, the history of *scriptural* interpretation. Those who had converted only once thought that their Bible could be approached directly, without the interposition of an interpretive framework. Perhaps that is what they thought historical criticism was—a framework that is not interposed or interpretive. Those with a double conversion story were in the same degree either ignorant or dismissive of traditional Jewish and Christian commentary. Their second conversion had convinced them that historical criticism alone provides an interpretive framework that is valid. It is to this latter claim that my colleague believed that after only two weeks in the program, all of our doctoral students would assent.

Smith's description of the way biblical studies are taught captures nicely the nature of the change that those students with the single conversion story would undergo in their first two weeks as advanced students of the Bible. "The courses actually available, and the training of men actually available to teach them," Smith wrote (in 1971), "are on the whole calculated to turn a fundamentalist into a liberal." Instead of fighting autonomous historical inquiry, especially the eminently disquieting inquiry into the dates and processes of composition of the biblical books themselves, the fundamentalist born again as a liberal would be able to place the biblical documents into the ancient Near Eastern or Greco-Roman worlds in which they originated and thus to recapture what they meant to their original authors and audiences, authors and audiences who lived before there was a Bible. Perhaps underestimating the vitality and tenacity of fundamentalism, Smith pronounced this transformation of fundamentalists into liberals "hardly any more a relevant task."

But he did have a more profound objection, and this is one that is even more urgent now than when he wrote over two decades ago. The scholars who are graduated from such programs, Smith observed, "seem on the whole little equipped to answer a question as to why one should be especially interested in those particular times and places, rather than in, let us say, classical India or medieval China or modern America." In other words, having replaced the study of the Bible with the study of an exotic culture, those whom Smith termed "liberals" are at a loss to explain why *this* exotic culture is to be preferred over others or, for that matter, over our own familiar culture, whose need for attention seems obvious. If this problem was apparent already in 1971, how much more pressing it is today, when multiculturalism is in the air and the groups challenging the traditional curricula of Christian societies are likely to pursue their demand for inclusion more forcefully than the partisans of classical India or medieval China ever did.

Smith's answer offered to his own question, then, does not seem adequate to the challenge of multiculturalism that has arisen since he wrote his essay. For he proposed to replace the study of the Bible in its pre-biblical historical context with "an investigation into the history of the Bible over the past twenty centuries," that is, into "the Bible as Scripture" rather than as a diverse and evolving set of documents that would be assembled into a closed anthology only later. The problem with this is that it only replaces one form of historicism with another, exchanging the study of early Jewish or Christian history for the study of later Jewish or Christian history. That the cultures of the Jews and of the Christians have been enormously influenced, indeed shaped, by the Bible for the past two millennia (more, in the case of the Jews) cannot be gainsaid. But why should the history of those two very different but related cultures be privileged over the history of Indian, Chinese, or, for that matter, African-American culture? And why, a dean might justly ask (and some doubtless do), should we devote a second faculty appointment to the history of the Bible as Scripture when we lack even one appointment in the history of the scriptures and classics of most of the other religious traditions?

To answer with the claim that the Bible is a foundational document of *our* culture is to imply more cultural homogeneity than many believe to be warranted. What is worse, it is to make a claim of normativity that is at odds with the historicistic methods that Smith, despite his shift of period, continued to endorse. To replace an authoritative book with an authoritative culture founded upon that book is still to make a claim that goes beyond the limits of historical description. Attention to a culture requires no less justification than attention to a book.

The failure of Smith's historicistic proposal to validate biblical studies brings us flush with the two-sidedness—and the pathos—of biblical scholarship in the historical-critical mode. On the one hand, the essential claim of this approach is that one may legitimately interpret Scripture against one's own tradition and personal belief. Historical critics thus rightly insist that the tribunal before which interpretations are argued cannot be confes-

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sional or dogmatic. The arguments offered must be historically valid, able, that is, to compel the assent of *historians*, whatever their religion or lack thereof, whatever their backgrounds, spiritual experiences, or personal beliefs, and without privileging any claim of revelation.

On the other hand, the very value-neutrality of this method of study puts its practitioners at a loss to defend the *value* of the enterprise itself. In a culture saturated with religious belief involving the Bible, this weakness was less apparent, for the defense was less called for. Now, however, after secularism has impugned the worth of the Bible, and multiculturalism has begun to critique the cultural traditions at the base of which it stands, biblical scholars, including, I must stress, even the most antireligious among them, must face this paradoxical reality: the vitality of their rather untraditional discipline has historically depended upon the vitality of traditional religious communities, Jewish and Christian. Those whom Smith termed "liberals"—that is, the scholars who assiduously place the Bible in the ancient Near Eastern or Greco-Roman worlds—have depended for their livelihood upon those who not only rejoice that the Bible survived these worlds but who also insist that it deserved to survive because its message is trans-historical. When fundamentalists become, in Smith's usage, liberals, the need for an affirmation that goes beyond mere historical description does not evaporate. Indeed, in the humanities today, every "canon," cultural as well as scriptural, is under intense suspicion, and every selection of subject matter is increasingly and correctly understood to involve a normative claim and not merely a description of value-neutral fact. In all cases, what scholars study and teach is partly a function of which practices and beliefs it is that they wish to perpetuate.

II

The contextualization of biblical documents in the cultures in which they were written is not only the hallmark of historical criticism; it is also inevitable. In spite of what we often hear from some of our literary colleagues, there is no such thing as the text in and of itself or the text as a world unto itself, and no possibility of standing *before* the text without also, in some measure, getting *behind* it. The question is not whether we make historical judgments or not; the question can only be whether we do so poorly or well. As soon as you have treated the discolorations on the page as a language, you have made an historical judgment. Focusing on lexical issues, John Barton of Oxford makes a related point in quintessentially British fashion:

> Charles II, when he visited the new St. Paul's during its construction, complimented the architect on producing "so awful and artificial" a building; it is essential for our belief that Charles II was a person of refined manners that we should *not* hold sequence of words to have fixed and determinate meanings in all ages and contexts.

And what is true for words also holds for larger units of meaning, such as genre. There is no communication that is altogether outside culture, even if it mediates a universal truth, and no culture that is outside history, even if it mediates a timeless reality.

If fundamentalists—and indeed the mass of religious believers—are inclined to overlook the inevitability and the unorthodox implications of historical reconstruction, liberal scholars face their own particular temptations. One we have already examined: the tendency to dissolve text into culture and the Bible into the history that preceded its synthesis. Of this, there is a subcategory that is especially prominent in times like our own when issues of social location and the distribution of power are receiving much attention. This is the temptation to interpret the text as *ideology*, that is, as only a justification for political arrangements. It is a temptation to which historical critics are most vulnerable, for, as the literary theorist Tzvetan Todorov points out, "it is at the moment of their creation that works are the most political," and a method of interpretation that is especially attentive to the cultural meaning of a text at its point of origin will be most inclined to highlight its political dimension. The danger for the integrity of biblical studies is that the text will again come to be seen as dispensable, that the Bible will once more recede from biblical studies, this time because it is conceived as only a series of ciphers for political power.

That this danger is not hypothetical is abundantly demonstrated in a recent introduction, *Power, Politics, and the Making of the Bible*, by Robert B. Coote and Mary P. Coote. Already by their third page, the authors have told us that the "Hebrew scriptures consist mainly of the scriptures of the temple cult" in Jerusalem, and that "the purpose of this cult was to legitimate rulers in Jerusalem, and this is what the scriptures are mostly about." Their book is in essence a sustained effort to replace the manifest text of the Bible with the putative underlying social and political reality that it disguises. No sooner have the authors employed the term "the nation Israel," for example, than they note parenthetically that "the concept of nation suggests a political consensus among subjects ruled by Jerusalem; this rarely if ever existed, but the scribes who wrote the Bible worked for rulers who said it did." Instead, they write, "Israel was [orig-

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inally] a name for power, the power of a tribe or confederation of tribes formed in the New Kingdom period in relation to Egyptian authority." The earliest narrative document that most critical scholars detect in the Pentateuch, the J (or Yahwistic) source, was composed to legitimate King David. It was "designed to appeal for the loyalty of tribal sheikhs in the Negeb and Sinai, David's buttress against Egypt in the south, by suggesting that Israel's early chiefs, the patriarchs, were southern sheikhs like themselves. . . ." It was only because "Egypt . . . was the principle enemy of David's Israel [that it] became the villain of the history." (In this, J is seen to have much in common with Psalm 2, which the Cootes term "a raucous salute to the pretensions of Davidic imperialism.") The next Pentateuchal document, the E (for "Elohistic") source, was written to legitimate another king, the northerner Jeroboam I, who went from exile in Egypt to dominion over his kinfolk. In the Cootes' mind, this is the key to the story of Joseph, whose dreams of domination God vindicates against his brothers' skepticism and resentment: Joseph is a cipher for Jeroboam. Recognizing that the "fear of God" is also a major theme in E, the Cootes are undeterred from their politicizing hermeneutic. "Like all privileged," they write, "Jeroboam feared himself in other men, and hence projected this fear, in the guise of cultic and judicial respect, or the 'fear of God,' as public policy." The fear of God in the Elohistic narrative is, in other words, only a nervous politician's effort to allay his insecurities.

The Cootes apply the same hermeneutic of suspicion to the New Testament. Of the early churchmen who promoted the new set of scriptures, they write: "Taking God's anointed king Jesus, shamed in death and restored in resurrection, as the standard for making the temple scriptures still meaningful, the bishops' interpretation insisted on Roman law in the absence of temple law, until Jesus' return should inaugurate a new nontemple law." Political power even determines the order of the gospels: "Matthew's version of Mark was eventually positioned ahead of Mark because it laid down the jurisdiction of Peter, regarded by then to have been the first bishop of Rome." Indeed, the content of the canon itself—the very existence of a Bible as the Church has traditionally known it—becomes a function of Roman hegemony and the refusal of some Christians to challenge it: "The Shepherd of Hermas," we are told, "typifies writings that placed the laws of the 'City of God' in clear opposition to the laws of the state; such works never made the canon." But the essentially political character of the theology of the Church did not, according to the Cootes, end with the closure of the Christian canon. "The philosophical debate on the divinity of Christ [that came to a head at the Council of Nicea in 325 C.E.] . . . veiled a political debate over jurisdiction":

> In the terms of the Arian controversy, Arius's view of Jesus implied the subordination of the Church to the state, as the human Jesus was subordinate to God, while the bishops' view made the Church the equal of the state, as Jesus was equal to God.

What the Nicene Creed really confesses, in other words, is the ambition of bishops in an age of empire.

Some of the interpretations in *Power, Politics, and the Making of the Bible* are not original, and most are open to serious question even from within the canons of historical criticism. The guiding methodology, however, follows upon a long historical-critical tradition of treating religious affirmations as subordinate to political interest. The first great statement of this lies in Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670), in which the norms of the Torah, regarded by rabbinic tradition as eternally valid, are presented as nothing more than the laws of the vanished Hebrew commonwealth and therefore, as Spinoza put it, obligatory "not even on Hebrews after the downfall of their nation." Out goes Torah; in comes politics. The interpretation of particular institutions and narratives as projections of political relationships easily survived the particular anti-theocratic impulses that motivated Spinoza's hermeneutic. It has, in fact, become a staple of critical scholarship in the last century and a half. What books like the Cootes' do is to pursue the logic of political reading in a way that is more relentless, systematic, and reductionistic than most historical critics have traditionally believed to be warranted. Indeed, *Power, Politics, and the Making of the Bible* slams shut many of the portals to transcendence that religiously committed historical critics have in a variety of ways been struggling to keep open since the Enlightenment. Unfortunately, in insisting upon political power as the prime motive force behind biblical literature, the Cootes are, in the present academic and religious climate, far from idiosyncratic.

Part of the weakness of their introduction, and many other studies in the same mode, is the operative concept of power. Catherine Bell, in her stimulating recent book, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, assails the Hobbesian theory of power, which is modeled on sovereignty. The Hobbesian theory is "the simplistic misconception that power is the imposition of one person's or group's will on another through a threat of violence." Against this, she argues for Foucault's view that "power is contingent, local, imprecise, relational, and

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organizational." "Foucault also sees the strategies of power used by kings and governments," Bell points out, "as embedded in and dependent upon the level of 'microrelations' of power, the local interactions and petty calculations of daily life." If Hobbes is wrong and Foucault right, then even when the Bible is seen as ideological literature, it is a capital mistake to interpret its narratives as devices by which the powerful few hoodwinked the marginalized many and kept them in submission. Rather, we should have to concede that the roots of even David's and Jeroboam's regimes lay in those "'microrelations' of power" that suffused the society and acquired an enduring literary testament in the Hebrew Bible. Having made the conceptual change that Bell proposes, modern critics can, of course, continue to pronounce those ancient power relations unjust, but they will have to do so in their own names. They can no longer assume that those arrangements endured because the mass of ancients had been duped by propaganda that they gullibly mistook for sacred literature. The irony is that this adjustment would require scholars of transparent democratic allegiance, like Robert B. and Mary P. Coote, to concentrate less on the elites and to show the masses more respect.

There are, in fact, even more serious difficulties in the interpretation of biblical literature as ideology. That scholars should place the documents, at least initially, within the social and political structures of the communities in which they originated is not problematic so long as the sociopolitical lens is presented as only one of many through which the material may be viewed. The difficulties mount, however, when that lens—indeed, *any* lens—is awarded a monopoly within the interpretive process, as when the Cootes characterize the complex and marvelously evocative poem that is Psalm 2 as "a raucous salute to the pretensions of Davidic imperialism." At the base of the problem here is the privilege that the modern interpreters assert for themselves not only against their own contemporaries, but also, and more revealingly, against the very material that they are seeking to understand. Leszek Kolakowski, in discussing the same issue with respect to the interpretation of myth, identifies the two guiding presuppositions of the whole procedure:

> First, it is assumed that myths, as they are explicitly told and believed, have a latent meaning behind the ostensible one and that this meaning not only is not in fact perceived by those sharing a given creed, but that of necessity it cannot be perceived. Secondly, it is implied that this latent meaning, which is accessible only to the outsider-anthropologist, is the meaning *par excellence*, whereas the ostensible one, i.e., the myth as it is understood by the believers, has the function of concealing the former; this ostensible meaning appears then as a product of inescapable self-deception, of an ideological mystification or simply of ignorance.

Kolakowski's conclusion is crucial: "These two premises are philosophical rather than anthropological in kind. . . . We need more than [the empirical material of the anthropologist] to assert that when people speak of God or the gods, of invisible forces purposely operating behind empirical facts, of the sacred qualities of things, they are *in fact*, and without knowing it, speaking of something entirely different. . . ."

The interpreters whose work rests on those two presuppositions are actually asserting a secular analogy to a religious revelation: they are claiming to have a definitive insight, not empirically derived, into the meaning of things, even things that they have never directly experienced and that are interpreted very differently by those who have. They assume that the observer's observation is truer than the practitioner's practice. The effect of such a claim, almost never acknowledged, is to do what the Cootes insist that biblical literature does—to set up a hierarchy. Only at the apex of *this* hierarchy stand not power-hungry kings and self-interested bishops, but (to borrow a term from Paul Mankowski) a "new clerisy" of academic theorists who, unlike the people they study, know what they are doing. Here Bell's insights about the modern study of ritual are eminently telling. "Theoretical discourse about ritual," she writes, "is organized as a coherent whole by virtue of a logic based on the opposition of thought and action." But the action is always someone else's; the thought is the modern scholar's:

> As a consequence of this distinction, the particularity of any one local ritual is contrasted with the more embracing, abstract generalizations of the researcher. . . . [The] rites . . . [are] portrayed as enactments exhibited to *others* for evaluation and appropriation in terms of their more purely theoretical knowledge.

It should not be overlooked that this identification of ritual as action in contradistinction to thought follows not only upon a certain Enlightenment critique of religion, but also upon a longstanding Christian critique of Judaism, a Protestant critique of Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, and a modern Western self-legitimation over against tribal peoples. It is no coincidence that in this model, it is the person whose life is *not* ritualized who has the clarity of vision: only as we

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break off from ritual communities and transcend their specific performances can we come to perceive the truth. The model does not allow for even the possibility that detachment from ritual performances may decrease one's insight and obscure one's vision. It definitively and non-dialectically shifts the locus of truth from the practicing community to the nonpracticing and unaffiliated individual.

Many will recognize these last remarks as an example of the exercise that Peter Berger has called "relativizing the relativizers." In the context at hand, it would be more accurately termed "suspecting the hermeneuts of suspicion." By posing the question of the modern interpreters' own place in reality as they sketch it, one challenges them to justify their claim, express or implicit, of independence from the dynamics that they depict as ultimate. Might it be the case that the interpretation of religion as only a mystification of power arrangements, for example, is itself an item in a discourse of power in which a new group, supported by new social arrangements, asserts its hegemony? If so—if, that is, there can be no transcendence over the social relationships in which we are embedded—then the assertion that the old order *ought* to bow to the new is groundless, for it presupposes the normativity that it also precludes. To his credit, Marx, who is the indirect source of much of the current reading of religion as ideology, recognized that the logic of his system required that his own thought be something other than an ideology. As the late Allan Bloom points out:

> In Marx, ideology meant the false system of thought elaborated by the ruling class to justify its rule in the eyes of the ruled, while hiding its real selfish motives. Ideology was sharply distinguished in Marx from science, which is what Marx's system is—i.e., the truth based on disinterested awareness of historical necessity.

In other words, the Marxist system requires the availability of an "absolute moment" that makes a conspectus of *all* history (including the eschatological future) possible. If Marxism itself is only another *ideology*, unable to assert a claim on truth, then, as Bloom puts it, Marx becomes a "fossil," superseded by the very process of history that he thought he had definitively comprehended.

Leo Strauss, Bloom's teacher (in some things but not all), makes the same point about historicism, as he defines it:

> Historicism asserts that all human thoughts or beliefs are historical, and hence deservedly destined to perish; but historicism itself is a human thought; hence historicism can be of only temporary validity, or it cannot be simply true. To assert the historicist thesis means to doubt it and thus to transcend it. . . . Historicism thrives on the fact that it inconsistently exempts itself from its own verdict about all human thought. . . . We cannot see the historical character of "all" thought—that is, of all thought with the exception of the historicist insight and its implications—without transcending history, without grasping something trans-historical.

If, as I said, the belief that the real meaning of religious phenomena is available only to the outside observer is a secular analogue to religious revelation, then a system of thought like historicism, which "exempts itself from its own verdict," is a secular equivalent to fundamentalism. For though it subjects all else to critique, it asserts axiomatically its own inviolability to critique. Demanding to be the norm by means of which truth and error are disclosed, this type of thinking, by definition, can never be in error.

III

It is no coincidence that the early pioneers of biblical criticism—Hobbes, Spinoza, Richard Simon—lived in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. Through the famous formula *cuius regio, eius religio*, the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which ended that war, established the superiority of the state over religion in fact and provided a hospitable climate for a theory to the same effect. By the end of the following century, a process of delegitimization of religious structures could be detected beneath many changes in both the Old World and the New. Churches were disestablished, the structures of Jewish communal autonomy abolished, and citizenship increasingly, if unevenly, defined in express disregard of the structures that had traditionally mediated between the individual and the state. "One must refuse everything to the Jews as a nation," the French revolutionary Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre proclaimed in a memorable formulation, "but one must give them everything as individuals; they must become citizens." Put positively, changes of this sort established the precious principles of civic equality and freedom of (and from) religion. Put negatively, they demoted traditional structures that claimed to be non-contingent and meta-historical—the people Israel, the Church—to the status of mere voluntary associations. In theory, one's public role would now be determined apart from, rather than through, these mediating structures. To combine the positive and the negative formulations: the liberty and equality of the individual free male adult would be secured by granting the state a monopoly on coercive power. All ritual communities would be reconceived as optional

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arrangements, and the decision whether to participate in their performances or remain detached would be the individual's alone. It bears mention that the burden of the new arrangement fell more heavily upon those traditions, especially Judaism and Catholicism, that had not conceived of themselves as essentially individualistic and of their social bodies as only voluntary associations.

In spite of its inequities, the great strength of the new arrangement that first emerged in the Enlightenment is that it allows for the maintenance of civility even in the presence of incompatible worldviews. By privatizing religion, restricting it to voluntary associations and the inner recesses of the individual heart, the new order permitted the emergence of a public space neither dominated nor even defined, at least in theory, by any of the clashing factors. The wars of religion would be no more. The new conflict would be between the liberal state and its absolutistic rivals.

Smith's use of the term "liberal" to designate historical-critical scholarship on the Bible is thus more than conventional; it is also profoundly appropriate. For historical criticism is the form of biblical studies that corresponds to the classical liberal political ideal. It is the realization of the Enlightenment project in the realm of biblical scholarship. Like citizens in the classical liberal state, scholars practicing historical criticism of the Bible are expected to eliminate or minimize their communal loyalties, to see them as legitimately operative only within associations that are private, non-scholarly, and altogether voluntary. Within the public space of the academy, scholars of every sort—Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, secular, or whatever—meet, again at least in theory, as equals. The academy must refuse everything to scholars as faithful members of religious communities, but it must give them everything as individuals; they must become critics.

But here, too, the new arrangement exacts a price. For example, it tends subtly to restrict the questions studied and the methods employed to those that permit the minimization of religious difference with relative facility—northwest semitic linguistics, for example, or the material culture of ancient Palestine, as opposed to questions of theology, ethics, or the phenomenology of religion. Those unwilling to pay the price are unable to participate in this type of study. *Their* model of biblical scholarship too often corresponds to the older political situation typified at its worst by the wars of religion, with each group treating its own book and its own interpretive procedures as absolute and staunchly refusing to step out of its dogmatic or confessional assumptions—a model of fideisms at best ignoring each other and at worst colliding. The middle ground is becoming rarer, as the allied disciplines and their demanding sets of technical skills increasingly occlude vision of the larger religious and even humanistic issues.

Though some of its practitioners like to present it as philosophically and theologically neutral, historical criticism is not without assumptions of its own. These were set forth in a famous essay of Ernst Troeltsch in 1898 and nicely summarized in a recent article by the distinguished scholar of Hellenistic Judaism and biblical theology, John J. Collins:

> (1) The principle of criticism or methodological doubt: since any conclusion is subject to revision, historical inquiry can never attain absolute certainty but only relative degrees of probability. (2) The principle of analogy: historical knowledge is possible because all events are similar in principle. We must assume that the laws of nature in biblical times were the same as now. Troeltsch refers to this as "the almighty power of analogy." (3) The principle of correlation: the phenomena of history are inter-related and inter-dependent and no event can be isolated from the sequence of historical cause and effect. To these should be added the principle of autonomy, which is indispensable for any critical study. Neither church nor state can prescribe for the scholar which conclusions should be reached.

The historic confrontation between traditional religion and the new set of assumptions was, according to Collins, "a clash between two conflicting moralities, one of which celebrated faith and belief as virtues and regarded doubt as sin, whereas the other celebrated methodological skepticism and was distrustful of prior commitments."

What is curious here is the unspoken assumption that the axioms of Troeltschian historicism are not "prior commitments" and themselves therefore a proper target for skepticism. (Here we are reminded of Strauss' observation about the tendency of historicism to "exempt itself from its own verdict about human thought.") This is even more curious in light of Collins' pregnant concession that historical criticism does not afford us uninterpreted facts, for "it too is a tradition, with its own values and assumptions, derived in large part from the Enlightenment and western humanism." This concession is vastly more devastating to Collins' argument than he seems to recognize, for the Enlightenment ethos to which he refers sought to *replace* tradition with reason and science and not simply to stand beside them as another option. When the legacy of the Enlightenment becomes just another *tradition*, it inevitably suffers the same deflation that Marxism suffers when it becomes another ideology. We are left with the discomforting

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question, why this tradition and not another? Why follow Troeltsch's three axioms, augmented by Collins' principle of autonomy, if they are not intrinsic to human rationality but themselves partake of historical and cultural particularity?

The question is especially acute for Collins, since there is another approach that his essay strives mightily to counter, an approach that does, in fact, relativize historical criticism. This is Brevard Childs' "canonical method," an agenda for biblical theology whose foundation, "the status of canonicity," is, in Childs' words, "not an objectively demonstrable claim but a statement of Christian belief" and therefore a threat to John Collins' unqualified historicism:

> Childs fails to give reasons [writes Collins] why anyone should adopt this approach to the text unless they happen to share his view of Christian faith. The canonical approach then fails to provide a context for dialogue with anyone who does not accept it as a matter of faith.

Here, Collins is surely invoking a double standard, for he has not explained how the Troeltschian historicism that he endorses can provide a context for dialogue with anyone who does not accept *its* presuppositions. It, too, does not facilitate communication with those outside its boundaries: it requires fundamentalists, for example, to be born again as liberals—or to stay out of the conversation altogether. Collins thus fails in his claim that historical criticism is more inclusive than Childs' canonical method. Each approach corresponds to particular communities founded upon discrete assumptions, Troeltschian historicism for Collins, a certain variety of Christian faith for Childs. Neither set of assumptions is self-evident or free of cultural particularism. I note, however, that if inclusiveness could be gauged quantitatively, then Childs would win the match hands down, for far more people with biblical interests share Christian faith than a thoroughgoing historicism. Were we historical critics to be classified as a religious body, we should have to be judged a most minuscule sect—and one with a pronounced difficulty relating to groups that do not accept our beliefs.

My point in noting this is that Collins' articulation of his "principle of autonomy, which is indispensable for any critical study," evades the crucial issue of the social character of knowledge. "Neither church nor state," he explains, "can prescribe for the scholar which conclusion should be reached." The implication seems to be that critical scholars are autonomous individuals pursuing the truth wherever it may take them, and thus committed to a principled unwillingness to defer to the judgments of a collectivity, religious or political. This implication is not without a substantial element of truth. The concept of academic freedom and the institution of tenure do provide academicians a measure of intellectual independence that is well-nigh unparalleled in human history or in nonacademic institutions of our own time. It is not at all the case, however, that the contemporary academy has found a way to dispense with all social processes for the validation of knowledge. On the contrary, various collectives are endlessly passing on the value of what professors have taught or written, and when the judgments they render are negative, the professors' ability to continue teaching and publishing inevitably suffers. Not everyone is hired, promoted, or tenured. Not every manuscript is published, nor every project funded. The academy has its own equivalents of excommunication and the revocation of citizenship.

Instead of setting forth a sharp dichotomy between autonomy and submission to a collective body, therefore, we would be wiser to note the inevitable correlation between the character of a social body and the nature of the knowledge that it validates. In the past, most universities, to one degree or another, articulated the ideals and underlying assumptions of a society that was predominantly Christian. Thus chapel could be required (even in some state universities), and a curriculum that privileged Christianity and neglected, subordinated, or misrepresented other religious traditions held sway—though again in varying degrees. Even in the contemporary secular or minimally religious college or university, the remnants of this older pattern can sometimes be detected, as in Bible courses in which the canon is the Christian one and the rich literature of late Second Temple and rabbinic Judaism are overlooked or minimized. In general, however, it is now religion itself and not merely certain traditions that the academy tends to overlook or minimize, replacing one parochialism with another. The regnant presupposition is that religion is an exception to human rationality and thus tolerable only to the extent that it is privatized and thus denied a voice in the public conversation. The knowledge of religion that this new context validates tends therefore to conform to the perspective of outsiders, that is, of people who can survey various traditions in like manner because they either subscribe to none or keep their allegiances private.

It is this distancing that Childs' canonical method of biblical interpretation effectively and deliberately shatters. This does not, however, mean that his approach is less public than the historicist alternative, or even that it is of use only to his fellow Christians. In point of fact, those who do not subscribe to the Christian faith, or Childs' particular variety of it, can, in many cases, profitably draw analogies between his canonical method and the

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dynamics of scripture in their own traditions (including traditions whose scripture is a corpus of secular law or literature). In the case of the revised historicism that Collins advocates, no such analogy is possible, for the method does not grant recognition to other traditions and cannot accept their textual procedures as valid analogies to its own. Indeed, even in this rather modest reformulation, historicism asserts itself in so totalistic a fashion that it cannot interact with other interpretive traditions, as Childs, for example, interacts positively with rabbinic and medieval Jewish exegesis in his commentary on Exodus. Instead, the historicistic position requires that scholars' loyalties to particular religious communities remain privatized and not be brought out into the open where dialogue takes place. Childs' revision of Calvinist scripturalism is therefore in some ways more pluralistic than Collins' revision of nineteenth-century historicism. Founded upon a historical particularity—the Protestant canon—Childs' method harbors a potential for respect for other historically particular traditions (a potential only *begun* to be realized in Childs' own work). By universalizing the claims of historical criticism, Collins denies himself the same potential for pluralism. Though he acknowledges that historical criticism is itself historically particular and a tradition, Collins continues to argue that all other traditions must yield to it.

There are good reasons that a method focused on canon should arouse the ire of uncompromisingly historicistic biblical scholars. One is that canons remind historicists of the community loyalties that their own tradition aspires at best to keep submerged and at worst to eradicate. For a biblical canon is always either Jewish or Samaritan or Eastern Orthodox or Roman Catholic or Protestant—but never generic, never universal. Its very existence reminds biblical scholars that the object of their study cannot, in the last analysis, be detached from specific religious communities and from traditions that are postbiblical. To the extent that they seek to invalidate those traditions—for example, by branding traditional interpretations as merely misinterpretations—they attack their own project. They cast considerable doubt upon the ongoing importance of the book to which they have devoted their life's work. They saw off the branch upon which they are sitting.

The fact of canon also challenges the most basic presupposition of historical criticism, that a book must be understood only within the context in which it was produced. The very existence of a canon testifies to the reality of *recontextualization*: an artifact may survive the circumstances that brought it into being, including the social and political sorts of circumstances to which so much attention is currently devoted. Indeed, it can outlive the culture in which it was produced. Barton points out that even when this happens, as in the case of the texts that came together in the Bible, that original culture continues nonetheless to inform the text. Because the Bible can never be altogether disengaged from the culture of its authors, historical criticism is necessary (though not necessarily in accordance with Troeltsch's principles).

But unless one holds that the Bible does not *deserve* to have survived its matrix—that the history of interpretation is only a history of misinterpretation—historical criticism alone cannot suffice. For were the meaning of the text *only* a function of the particular historical circumstances of its composition, recontextualization would never have occurred, and no Bible would have come into existence. If this be so, the tradition of historical criticism should not be abandoned within pluralistic settings, but only reconceived so as to recognize the challenge of pluralism. What must be abandoned are its totalistic claims. Room must be made for other senses of the text, developed by other traditions, and historical criticism must learn to interact more creatively with those other traditions, neither surrendering to them nor demanding that they surrender to historical criticism. Critical scholars must no longer pronounce other interpretations altogether erroneous simply because they take the texts out of their first historical context—simply because, that is, they permit the texts to survive the ancient civilizations in which they originated.

Historical criticism, in sum, will have to retreat from the severe philosophical historicism that can still often be detected in its applications. It will not only have to surrender the positivistic notion of critical autonomy and recognize itself as a *tradition*, as Collins argues. It will also have to recognize that it corresponds to a *community of interpretation*. This community is of a very special kind, however, one dependent upon other communities of interpretation for the very object of its inquiry and, historically if not necessarily, for its motivation as well. Historical critics thus constitute a secondary community; they engage in second-order reflection upon the primary language of the religious communities they study. Like the liberal state at its best, biblical studies in non-confessional settings must facilitate rather than impede dialogue and debate among the primary communities, religious and secular, within its compass. That compass will not be universal: fundamentalists who give historical criticism no quarter and historical critics who are fundamentalistic about their own methods will be unable to participate in the multisided discourse. But the new discourse will be more authentically pluralistic than the kinds that now

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dominate, especially the kind that falsely claims to be pluralistic when it is only historicistic.

There are, to be sure, many philosophical issues here that are as nettlesome as they are pressing. What common conceptual framework will ground this new discourse once historicism has been relegated to another item within it? How can the pluralism of the new discourse avoid degenerating into relativism, as the senses of the text multiply uncontrollably and the common inquiry dies of fractionation? These points and others like them I all too happily leave to the philosophers, except to note this: the idea that Scripture has multiple senses—some available across community boundaries, others not—is not altogether unprecedented in the history of Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation. Rather, it has been obscured by a long-standing religious preference for the plain sense on the one side and the disrespect of historical critics convinced that only they know what the Bible *really* means on the other.

It may be time to reexamine how different senses of the text once coexisted in minds that had not surrendered to the nihilistic notion of total semantic indeterminacy. The issue is not new. What is new is the urgency that it acquires in a setting of cultural pluralism. For pluralism makes demands not only upon traditionalists, but also upon critics, not only upon fundamentalists, but also upon liberals—in both the religious and the classical political senses of the word.

IV

My point would be misunderstood if it were taken to be that only a religious affirmation can justify the presence of biblical studies in a curriculum and that the field cannot be open to secular practitioners. Given the long-standing tendency of historical-critical scholars to abuse the method for their own confessional purposes, the presence of secular scholars is not only permissible, but desirable: they keep their religious colleagues honest. No small assignment!

Nor is the foregoing meant to imply that the subjects that biblical scholars sometimes condescendingly term the "ancillary disciplines" (such as Syro-Palestinian archeology and northwest semitic philology) cannot stand on their own, as some of their practitioners now indignantly insist they must. The point is only that if such disciplines do stand on their own, they can no longer justify themselves on the grounds of their relevance to biblical interpretation. There may be a good *secular* reason for a dean to prefer to fund Ugaritic or Coptic (which no one speaks) over Hungarian or Tagalog (which millions speak). But it is the secular reasons upon which those who want the so-called ancillary disciplines to stand alone must rely. If they rely instead on the residual momentum of religious belief, they are worse than ancillary: they are parasitic.

What *has* been argued here is that the secularity of historical criticism represents not the suppression of commitment, but its relocation. Scholars with religious motivations are thus not out of order in challenging their secular colleagues to make public their own motivations in pursuing biblical studies and to explain how the method fulfills that motivation. In an era of multiculturalism and budgetary constraint, this inevitably entails explaining how the relocation of commitment from a traditional religious sphere can maintain a place of relative privilege for the study of the Bible. Should the answer substitute a cultural for a religious motivation and center on the importance of the Bible in Western civilization, then, in the current climate, a defense of the importance of the West, at least for American students, is imperative. This is, of course, ironic in light of the tendency of historical criticism to think of itself as transcending particularism and debunking claims of privilege. It is doubly ironic because historical critics have usually neglected the modes of biblical interpretation that preceded them, labeling them "precritical" and thus irrelevant to their own task.

Any secular defense of the study of the Bible will also need to account for the canon chosen. Will there be an "Old Testament" or a Tanakh? If the former, then why, if Christological claims are not credited? And if the latter, then why again, if Judaism is also disallowed? Should the response be the classic historicist point that the books should be examined within the limits of their dates of composition, one is compelled again to point out that when they were written, they were not yet biblical and that most do not presuppose a book-religion at all. In short, biblical studies inevitably (indeed by definition) involves the affirmation of certain religious judgments—if not for the present, then at least as a legacy of the past with continuing *normative* effects. Secularity is no guarantee of religious neutrality.

Historical criticism has long posed a major challenge to people with biblical commitments, and for good reason. What I hope to have shown is that the reverse is also the case: the Bible poses a major challenge to people with historical-critical commitments. When those fundamentalist students with whom I began become liberals, they solve some of their problems, but they also open new ones. And with these problems, the contemporary university, child of the Enlightenment and bastion of liberalism, is not well-equipped to help. FT

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Review Essay

When Shepherds Are Sheep

George Weigel

A FLOCK OF SHEPHERDS: THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS. By THOMAS J. REESE. *Sheed & Ward. 406 pp. $19.95 paper.*

Over the past decade, Father Thomas J. Reese, S.J., a fellow of the Woodstock Theological Center in Washington, has become perhaps the most dogged, and certainly the most prolific, Catholic bishop-watcher in the United States. Collecting and retailing stories about bishops has a long history, of course, and one sometimes gets the sense that, in the clerical culture of the American presbyterate, the lines between fantasy and fact have gotten even more blurred in recent years than they were in the glory days of the Irish Catholic hegemony. But Father Reese, who quite understandably wants to be regarded as something other than an elegant clerical gossip, works out of a different tradition from that of the Hibernian fabulists. A doctoral graduate of the University of California (where he studied political science under the eminent Aaron Wildavsky), Reese is an exponent of the view that modern social science can illuminate the work of the Church in ways that more traditional analyses often miss.

Thus in his 1989 book, *Archbishop*, Father Reese tried to use "social science methodology and theory to gain a greater understanding of church organization and decision-making." The result was a major disappointment for readers who, perhaps seduced by the book's alluring subtitle ("Inside the Power Structure of the American Catholic Church"), expected some juicy revelations of The Secrets. Instead, Father Reese (who, as a working journalist, knows full well that his access to men who value confidentiality would be instantly cut off by a lapse into kiss-and-tell), gave his audience a straightforward and craftsmanlike answer to the question, "What does an archbishop do for a living?" *Archbishop* also explored the process by which bishops are selected, and Reese's detailed portrait of the actual operation of an American archdiocese doubtless opened many eyes (and perhaps raised a few eyebrows) among Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

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As a result of *Archbishop*, and of his regular reports in *America* magazine on the major meetings of the American hierarchy, Father Reese has become the Norman Ornstein—the regnant quotemeister—of American Catholic commentators on matters episcopal: the man to whom the secular press instinctively turns for a sound bite at the end of a bishops' meeting, or in the course of miter-centered controversy (e.g., the long-running soap opera of the pastoral letter on "women's concerns"). And Father Reese's reputation as a close student of the American hierarchy will doubtless be enhanced among the fourth estate by his current book, *A Flock of Shepherds: The National Conference of Catholic Bishops.*

Like *Archbishop, A Flock of Shepherds* presents itself not as "inside" information but as mainstream social science. Reese's purpose is "to examine the NCCB/USCC [the canonical bishops' conference and its public policy agency, the United States Catholic Conference] as a legislative assembly using social science methods that have been applied to political legislatures for many years." The author is not, he argues, taking sides in any of the disputed questions about the ecclesiological status of the conference or the wisdom of its (voluminous) public policy pronouncements. Rather, he writes, he "wants to understand how the conference works and what it has done."

At this rudimentary level of description, *A Flock of Shepherds* largely succeeds. Father Reese capably describes the demographics of the bishops' conference, and explains once again the complex process by which bishops are chosen; in this book, special attention is paid, naturally, to the conference's Committee on Selection of Bishops and its efforts, unsuccessful to date, to play a larger role in the appointment process. Reese then traces the historical antecedents of the present NCCB/USCC: the nineteenth-century provincial and plenary councils of Baltimore (a unique expression of Catholic conciliarism and episcopal collegiality in that period); the annual meetings of the nation's archbishops, which began in 1890; the formation of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in the wake of World War I and its subsequent control by the great Midwestern troika of Cardinal Edward Mooney (Detroit), Cardinal Samuel Stritch (Chicago), and Archbishop John T. McNicholas, O.P. (Cincin-

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nati); and the transformation, in response to the Second Vatican Council, of the old NCWC into the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference.

Father Reese then pens brief portraits of the agendas and management styles of the eight NCCB presidents to date (Cardinals John Dearden, John Krol, and Joseph Bernardin; Archbishops John Quinn, John Roach, John May, and Daniel Pilarczyk; and Bishop James Malone) and the five general secretaries of the conference (Bernardin; Bishops James Rausch and Thomas Kelly, O.P.; Monsignors Daniel Hoye and Robert Lynch). There is a short discussion of the process and dynamics of NCCB elections (full of interesting psephological nuance), and an all-too-brief mention of the study done for the bishops by the management consultant firm of Booz-Allen & Hamilton, which led to the basic structuring of the NCCB/USCC dyad in 1966. (Perhaps understandably, Father Reese does not mention that Cardinal Dearden, the NCCB/USCC's first president, chose Booz-Allen & Hamilton because he admired the firm's work in redesigning the management of the . . . auto industry.) In his discussion of the presidents and general secretaries, Reese gives appropriate pride of place to founding father Dearden (of Detroit; thus the Booz-Allen & Hamilton/Motown connection) and its first general secretary, then-Bishop and now-Cardinal Bernardin. By the end of Dearden's tenure as president, "the conference" had established itself as a focal point of the bishops' attention in a far more intense way than had ever been envisioned under the old NCWC. And it was Bernardin who, by personal style and bureaucratic ability, defined the "consensus" model of decision-making (and the atmospherics that went along with it) that have dominated the conference ever since.

A Flock of Shepherds then analyzes, in somewhat numbing detail, the activities, management, and deliberative procedures of the sixty-two committees of the NCCB/USCC (whose concerns span the range from pro-life activities to oversight of Montezuma Seminary). Here, Reese also examines the key role of the Administrative Committee/Board, which sets the agenda for full meetings of "the body" and acts in the name of the bishops between those meetings, and the less-than-key role of the bishops' "National Advisory Council," which began as the prototype for a National Pastoral Council (of bishops, priests, religious, and laity), got shunted aside in the wake of the shenanigans at the 1976 bicentennial "Call to Action" conference in Detroit (an official NCCB/USCC-sponsored event at which primarily lay-activist participants voted the deconstruction of American Catholicism with glee and abandon), and now limps along on an annual budget of $77,000 (which, in 1991, 41 percent of the bishops wanted to cut even further).

Father Reese then discusses the process by which the bishops' conference adopts key statements and documents, the conference's role in the public policy arena, and the relationship between the NCCB/USCC and the Holy See. On these issues, *A Flock of Shepherds* will cause no heartburn within the conference leadership or its powerful staff, for Father Reese shares the views that prevail in those quarters (or, perhaps better, the views that are regularly propounded from those quarters): namely, that the consensus procedure works well; that charges of staff hegemony are wildly exaggerated; that the bishops, in their address to the worlds of politics, are essentially nonpartisan centrists who challenge liberals and conservatives equally; and that things are really quite fine between the conference and its staff on the one hand, and the Holy See on the other, reports to the contrary being the work of disgruntled conservatives. (More on those orthodoxies in a moment.)

Reese concludes his book with a chapter on the bishops' conference's finances (tight, and getting tighter), and offers a series of recommendations for the modest refinement of certain conference structures. The book also includes a series of useful appendices: here we find the five-year (1991-1996) "Mission Statement of the NCCB/USCC" (interesting, but also a monument to the overpowering influence of management theory and jargon—"co-lead agents," etc.—on the bureaucratic operation of the conference); an index of the 119 "major statements" of the NCCB/USCC between 1966 and 1988; and a list of the conference's seventy-seven "legislative priorities" in the 102nd Congress (1991-1992).

All of this represents a great deal of research on Father Reese's part, and the mastery of an enormous amount of detail. But this reader, at least, came away from *A Flock of Shepherds* with the unsettling sense that the book never engaged the really serious, and really interesting, issues involved with the very fact of the NCCB/USCC: which is, after all, a rather dramatic innovation in a Church that did its local business elsewise for almost two millennia.

Part of the difficulty here is Father Reese's position as a confidant of key bishops and staff, and his commitment to the notion that the NCCB/USCC, as presently structured and operated, is a Good Thing. The book simply assumes, as a given, that the NCCB/USCC is an institutional innovation with staying power (an assumption powerfully reinforced, it must be conceded, by the bishops' recent move into a state-of-the-art, $29 million office complex near the Catholic University of America). Father Reese tries throughout the book to show some scholarly distance from his subject(s). But the

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game is given away early: on p. xi, to be precise. There, in the acknowledgements, Reese thanks "those bishops who leaked me documents that I could not get from the NCCB/USCC staff," including "some confidential minutes of NCCB/USCC Administrative/Board meetings and of executive [i.e., closed] sessions of the NCCB/USCC assembly." Access to such materials, under such circumstances, doubtless enhances Father Reese's standing among fellow journalists as a commentator on the conference's affairs. But it does little to suggest that his is a disinterested account of the NCCB/USCC. Leaks, ecclesiastical or political, are not acts of supererogation.

Reese's historical reconstruction and contemporary analysis are thus cast within a set of assumptions that reflect the views (and as a political scientist would insist, the interests) of the NCCB/USCC staff and the bishops who have been the major players in the conference since its inception. There is nothing untoward or unsavory about this, of course. But it does give the book the flavor of a house dressing. Father Reese tells us that he interviewed "all the living presidents, vice presidents, and general secretaries of the conference, as well as many committee chairs and staff." All well and good. But there is no evidence in the book's extensive notes that Father Reese interviewed any of the more thoughtful critics of the conference's theological justification, its structure, its *modus operandi*, or its pronouncements. The book's focus is held firmly on the bishops with the large conference staff kept discreetly in the background (save for some cameo appearances of senior staff members during which they explain that the bishops are really in charge); but while this may be good internal ecclesiastical politics, it is not a very useful way to analyze a "legislative assembly" according to "social science methods." Imagine analyzing the structure, operations, and product of the Congress, or even of the smallest state legislature or city council, without a careful study of the functions and political philosophy of the relevant staff. The net result is a book that is interesting and useful, not so much as a dispassionate analysis of the NCCB/USCC, but as reflection of what it is those with a vested interest in the current structure and operations of the conference think they are doing.

Part of what they're doing, of course, is trying to be "players" in Washington. And it is this public function of the NCCB/USSC—the bishops' major statements on the morality of great public issues, and the USCC's lobbying efforts on behalf of those numerous "legislative priorities"—that has been the conference's most controversial feature, in both the Church and the wider society. Father Reese is a stalwart defender of recent conference practice on this front. But surely, in the early 1990s, at the end of the Cold War, a different judgment on the bishops' accomplishments as public moral teachers is at least worth discussing.

Take, for example, *The Challenge of Peace*, the 1983 NCCB pastoral letter that provoked intense controversy at the time of its preparation and that Father Reese, reflecting the views of the letter's principal authors, describes as a "high point" in the history of the NCCB/USCC. Why does *TCOP* seem so utterly dated a mere nine years after its adoption? Part of the answer, of course, lies in the trajectory of recent history. Nobody in 1983 could have anticipated the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and of the Soviet Union itself. But *TCOP* was not just overrun by events; the history in question falsified, empirically, the political and strategic analysis of the letter. The policy prescriptions of *TCOP* were based on the strategic judgment that the central problem in the Cold War was the fact of nuclear weapons themselves; and the political assumption (reflecting the orthodoxies of arms control mandarins like McGeorge Bundy, Robert McNamara, Paul Warnke, and Gerard Smith) was that nuclear weapons could be "detached" from the ideological struggle between East and West and dealt with as a kind of independent variable in world politics. Thus the "threat of nuclear war" could be minimized irrespective of the nature of the regime that aimed its weapons at us. This, of course, was to get the matter precisely backwards. The "threat of nuclear war" has been dramatically diminished, not because of "arms control," but because of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the death of European communism. Where the "threat of nuclear war" still exists today, it exists, once again, because of regimes and their ideologies. (No Frenchman loses sleep over the British nuclear force; but a lot of people in Seoul, Tokyo, and Tel Aviv are justifiably worried about a nuclearized Kim Il-Sung or Saddam Hussein.)

The bishops' conference was also mistaken in its reading of the struggle for peace, freedom, security, and prosperity in Central America. From the late 1970s through the 1980s, and under the influence of two key staffers, Father J. Bryan Hehir and Thomas Quigley, the conference testified before the Congress and lobbied on behalf of an analysis which minimized (to the point of obscuring) the role of communist ideology and communist forces in the region, and which stressed that weapons—especially U.S. weapons—were the cause of the turmoil in El Salvador and Nicaragua. History has, yet again, proven the inadequacies of this analysis. There is today a modest improvement in the situation of those countries. And it has everything to do with three facts: the collapse of the Moscow-Havana connection to the region; the electoral victory of the democratic resistance in Nicaragua; and the resilience of the fragile democracy inaugurated by

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José Napoleon Duarte in El Salvador. It cannot be said that the positions taken by the bishops' conference in the 1980s anticipated, or very clearly supported, these outcomes—and the policies that made those outcomes possible.

The other major pastoral letter of the bishops during the 1980s, the 1986 document *Economic Justice for All*, had an even shorter shelf-life than *The Challenge of Peace*. It has been, if not contradicted, then largely superseded by John Paul II's 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, which is a far richer (and considerably shorter) theological, historical, and practical reflection on the free society in its economic, political, and moral-cultural dimensions.

Where the bishops have been far more influential is in their steady commitment to moral teaching and policy advocacy on a host of "life issues" across the spectrum from abortion to euthanasia. Indeed, it is fair to say (although Father Reese doesn't say it) that, absent the initial leadership of the bishops' conference in the immediate aftermath of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, the right-to-life movement might well have been stillborn. When the *New York Times* said, on January 23, 1973, that the abortion issue had been "settled" by the Supreme Court, only one major institution in the United States got up and openly challenged that widely shared judgement: the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The right-to-life movement may be largely sustained, today, by the energies of evangelical and fundamentalist Protestants. But that was not the case at the beginning. And the bishops and the relevant staff deserve full marks for their accomplishment in this field. The bishops' conference has also been an influential force in resisting the manias of the Hemlock Society and its campaign for the legalized dispatch of the inconveniently elderly and ill; working largely behind the scenes, for example, the conference made a significant contribution to the stunning defeat of a euthanasia initiative in November 1991 in Washington State, a bastion of lifestyle libertinism.

Why has the NCCB/USCC been rather more successful in its address to right-to-life questions than to issues of foreign policy and the structure of the U.S. economy? It is not, I think, because the bishops have been more "conservative" on the former issues, at a time when a right-of-center tide was running high in American public life. It is true, and no amount of official or semi-official obfuscation can alter the fact, that the USCC is widely (and accurately) perceived, throughout the worlds of Washington journalists and lobbyists, as a supporter of "progressive" causes. And the general drift of our politics over the past dozen years has been away from Great Society patterns of governmental activism. But I suspect that the real reason for the disparity of impact here has far more to do with theology than with politics.

The bishops have been able to sustain their right-to-life position, in the face of the opposition of virtually every other culture-forming institution in the country, because that position is rooted in a well-developed body of biblical and theological doctrine and reflection from which policy applications can be fairly easily drawn. That was not the case with *TCOP*, the Central America testimony, or *Economic Justice for All*. Here, the doctrinal and theological foundations were far weaker (or more controverted), and certain political assumptions thus took over the analysis and the prescription.

For example: when the committee charged with drafting *TCOP* first began its work, then-Archbishop Bernardin told the committee members that the one thing they would not consider was unilateral nuclear disarmament. Well, why not? If the analysis was to be primarily driven by theological and moral considerations, then surely there could be no foreclosing of potential policy outcomes—even if it was understood that the Holy See would have looked askance at a proposal for the unilateral nuclear disarmament of the United States. But in fact the analysis was driven in no small part by a commitment to keep the letter "in play" in the worlds of public policy, where radical unilateralism was understood as a species of mental illness.

Father Reese is right, in one sense, in his claim that the bishops' conference does not fit altogether comfortably into the standard ideological categories. But whether that is because the bishops are "centrists" who have taken their positions on the basis of a theological analysis that transcends partisan fashions, or whether it is because the conference's overall "progressive" reputation has been "tarnished," in some circles, by its firm opposition to abortion-on-demand and euthanasia, is at least an argument worth engaging. (It should be noted, in this context, that the bishops have recently authorized an increase in the budget of their Pro-Life Secretariat, while holding constant, or cutting, other "advocacy" budgets.)

Then there is the question of the relationship between the bishops' conference and the Holy See. Father Reese catalogues and briefly discusses some of the points at which the Vatican and the NCCB have disagreed on internal Church matters: the sequence of first confession and first communion for children, the canonical procedures for the annulment of marriages, the age of confirmation, lay roles in the liturgy, the sale of church property, and the relations between bishops and theologians. Some of these questions have generated real tension; others have been more easily resolved. But the subtext of this part of Father Reese's exposition is

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the implication that the Holy See has been anxious, ever since the Council, to rein in the NCCB/USCC: a reining in that Reese, like his sources, finds a bit stuffy (to say the least).

It should be conceded, in all candor and with all due respect, that there are offices in the Holy See where the situation of the Church in the United States is not all that well understood: where America is viewed as Western Europe blown up to ten thousand diameters. This is a miscontrual both of the complexities of American culture and of the lived situation of the Church at the grassroots level in the United States. If there are things that Rome is obliged to teach America from time to time, it is also true that there are things that Rome can learn from the American experience of Catholicism.

It is not surprising that Father Reese has rather more to say about the latter than the former. But it would have amplified his analysis had Reese devoted more than passing attention to several interventions by the Holy See that have had a decisive impact on the NCCB/USCC "process"—and on tempering some of the bishops' more adventurous enterprises. The January 1983 consultation that took place between the second and third drafts of *The Challenge of Peace* is dealt with rather cursorily, and strictly according to the exegesis of the drafting committee's chairman, Cardinal Bernardin (i.e., the consultation was useful, but made little difference in the final text). But the fact remains that the third draft of *TCOP* was considerably altered from the second: it was more serious theologically, less influenced by anti-nuclear apocalypticism, and discernibly tougher (at least by its own standards) on the realities of totalitarianism. These alterations coincided with the key points raised during the Vatican consultation. Nor does Father Reese mention the fact that the synthesis of the meeting's discussions and conclusions, which the Pope had ordered sent to each of the American bishops, was accompanied—without the prior knowledge of the Holy See—by a cover letter from NCCB president Roach and committee chairman Bernardin giving what might be called the "American Authorized Version" of the contents of the synthesis, its significance, and its relevance to the bishops' future deliberations. (The conference took a similar hermeneutic tack toward *Centesimus Annus*. Its press advisory, which featured a synopsis of the encyclical, made a rather creative use of ellipses at one key point where the encyclical seemed to challenge *Economic Justice for All* on the matter of the state's obligation to guarantee a right to employment.)

Even more recently, there can be no doubt that a Vatican intervention, in the form of a June 1991 international consultation held at the congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, fundamentally altered the theological, anthropological, and pastoral perspective of the so-called "women's pastoral," and in ways that were not congenial to the responsible NCCB drafting committee.

Father Reese suggests that the Vatican's concerns about the NCCB/USCC have to do in part with the "public consultative process" the bishops have adopted in the preparation of major pastoral letters: a phenomenon that is, to be sure, unique among the episcopal conferences of the world. (Whether that "consultative process" makes a discernible difference in the perspective that the bishops' staff brings to the drafting of these documents is another question left unexplored by Father Reese.) But beneath what is often presented as a political power struggle between Rome and the new episcopal conferences there is a theological issue of great moment: namely, the method of discernment and decision-making appropriate to a religious community and a religious community's leadership.

The leadership and senior management staff of the NCCB/USCC pride themselves on the "consensus" model of decision-making that has been a hallmark of their enterprise since the general secretaryship of then-Bishop Bernardin, and on the "process" that informs the shaping of the "consensus." But there may well be serious flaws with both the model and the *modus operandi*, flaws that are simply not explored in *A Flock of Shepherds*.

One possible problem is the confusion of debate according to *Robert's Rules of Order* (which governs the functioning of the bishops' general assembly), and genuine discernment and deliberation. "Women for Faith and Family," a conservative group that has been highly critical of the so-called "women's pastoral," recently published the transcript of a part of the debate on the third draft of that letter, held during the bishops' meeting last June at Notre Dame. To read the transcript is, in truth, to weep. Not only is the level of discourse almost pathetic in its thinness; there is no real discussion. And because of that, there is no real deliberation. Bishops speak in terse statements, which frequently have nothing to do with the statements that preceded them. A traffic light, with red, green, and amber fixtures, governs the rhythm of the "debate." (Really.)

But even this exchange of prepackaged *dicta* constituted a modest improvement over what took place at the May 1983 special meeting of the body that finalized *The Challenge of Peace*. Even with a third draft before them, the bishops had to consider hundreds of proposed amendments. The procedure for doing so was devised by the general secretary, Msgr. Hoye (who remarked prior to the meeting that "the time for making speeches is over"), and Father Hehir. Proponents of amendments were given two minutes to make their case; the drafting committee had thirty seconds to respond; a max-

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imum of four seconders or opponents, within similarly draconian time restraints, was permitted. Throughout the process, Cardinal Bernardin, assisted by Father Hehir, offered a running commentary on the proposed amendments, not least to keep them in line with the agreements reached at the Vatican consultation five months before.

At one point, the bishops had to reverse gears dramatically, within an hour, on the crucial question of the morality of any possible use of nuclear weapons (first denying the possibility, then leaving open a millimeter of ambiguity). In the midst of the seemingly interminable process, the business got almost silly. Archbishop Philip Hannan of New Orleans, a former airborne chaplain, had offered numerous amendments that had been consistently rejected by his brethren. Then Archbishop Roach, who was chairing the meeting, said, of one innocuous Hannan proposal, "I know this is way out of line, but Archbishop Hannan's a great guy, let's give him this one." This may be a gesture appropriate to a Rotary Club, perhaps even a stockholders' meeting. But, for all that this was intended as a kindness, it was utterly out of place in the counsels of a body of religious leaders deliberating an issue of the gravest moral and political consequence.*

The issue of deliberative models also touches the question of the NCCB/USCC staff and their influence on the bishops (or, as some of Reese's more insouciant sources would have it, their lack thereof). Bishops are very busy people. They have large organizations to run, and many of those organizations are riven with conflicts and divisions. The bishops' ability to focus on the mounds of material prepared for NCCB general assemblies, and for various committee meetings, is necessarily limited. So is their knowledge, particularly on matters of public policy. In these circumstances, it is simply preposterous to suggest that the NCCB/USCC is not an agency in which staff is very, and perhaps determinatively, influential. No doubt there are many capable and dedicated people working at the NCCB/USCC, often for salaries considerably below what they could command in the marketplace. But whether a decision-making process that is necessarily so influenced by staff—and particularly by a staff that tends to be self-perpetuating in terms of its intellectual perspective and ecclesiological vision—is congruent with the processes of discernment and deliberation appropriate to a national body of bishops is not self-evidently clear, Father Reese and his sources notwithstanding.

The NCCB/USCC structure and process detailed by Father Reese is quite probably something of a watershed in the history of Catholicism in the United States; but not the watershed that the conference and its proponents imagine. For the NCCB/USCC, with its bureaucratization of religious leadership, may be the most striking contemporary example of what appears to be a virtually inexorable dynamic in American Christianity: the process of "denominationalization." It was once thought that Catholicism would be immune to this dynamic, at least in its more extravagant expressions. But in the American Catholic context, the NCCB/USCC has been crucial in accelerating the transformation of religious leadership, with its distinctive charism of authority, into bureaucratic managership. It is a process that has been replicated in virtually every diocese in the country, as a brief glance at almost any bishop's appointment calendar will attest.

That bureaucratization has had many effects, some of them arguably salutary. But it is no accident, as the Marxists used to say, that the bureaucratization of the Church at the national diocesan level has been paralleled by the deliquescence of those movements of which the Church in America was once justifiably proud: the Catholic Family Movement, the Catholic Youth Organization, the Young Catholic Workers, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the various Catholic Action groups, and so forth. The decline (and in some cases, disappearance) of those movements has many causes. But the bureaucratization of American Catholic life is surely one of them. The bureaucracy tends to absorb everything into itself: not out of malice, but just because that is the way bureaucracies function. And only a naif would believe that leaders—even leaders who conceive their leadership as being divinely mandated—are immune to that process of absorption.

We know with reasonable certainty where this process of denominationalization/bureaucratization leads: for the path ahead (so to speak) has been scouted by the now-moribund churches of mainline/oldline Protestantism, the pioneers of both the staff/leadership relationship and the "process"/"consensus" decision-making model now displayed at the NCCB/USCC (and in many dioceses). Perhaps Catholicism is not inexorably set on that path; it has theological resources and a Roman leadership that could help apply the brakes before the bottom

* The Roach/Hannan episode also illustrates another dimension of the NCCB that goes unexplored in Reese's book: namely, the NCCB as men's club. Happily and appropriately, the NCCB has promoted a greater sense of solidarity and collegiality among the bishops. But the current organizational model, with its related passions for "consensus" and "process," has also fostered a club atmosphere that makes confrontation very, very difficult. Which explains, in part, why some of the recent disagreements among the bishops, as on their AIDS statement, have left rather a lot of bruises. The disagreement was not just about substance; to disagree sharply (and, in some cases, publicly) with the draft statement (which proposed to cite condom usage as a morally tolerable public health measure) broke the unwritten club rules.

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of the slippery slope is reached. But however things work out in the short term, there is an enormous irony in the portrait of bureaucratic Catholicism so ably painted by Father Reese: all of this, beginning with the Booz-Allen & Hamilton study, has been done in the name of implementing a Council that laid renewed stress on the evangelical nature of the Church and the sacramental distinctiveness of the local bishop.

In fact, the very title of Father Reese's book raises the fundamental question that the book and the bishops' conference do not face. Shepherds lead flocks. When shepherds become flocks, is something in the nature of being a shepherd irreparably damaged?

Intense Transforming Care: On the Way Back

Slowly: out of that sleep that numbs the knife edge,
I come home to a various world, to faces and voices,
To a blur of angels at this keep, awaiting.

Vague prophecies of life somewhat lasting,
A testing of steadying heartbeat, of firm susperation.

Such is the welcomed review of my waking,
I, who long wait a review of old words:
Indifferent journals stack high in the dusty library.

It is time to set this whole house in order:
With what mutual joy, then, this steady acclaim;
A cold stethoscope even assures of rumbling gases,
Last sign of return to the intricate, the elemental.

What joy in this communal moment devoted to life:
We celebrate this late voice of my waking,
The lowly intestines surrendering recovery.

Slowly: I shall return to dark bread and deep wine.

Marion Montgomery

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Homosexuality in Uniform: Is It Time?

Eugene T. Gomulka

The author released the original version of this position paper concerning U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) policy on homosexuality in the military last July. A revised version of the document appeared in the December 1992 Proceedings *of the U.S. Naval Institute. This article is published by permission.*

Preface

The purpose in writing this paper is to help focus the current discussion on the issue of homosexuality and military service. It is not to be misconstrued as criticism or an attack on homosexual persons as individuals or a group. Personally, I know and care very much for individuals who have confided to me that they are homosexuals. I am pastorally aware of problems and challenges that they experience, and I pray that God may help them to experience a happy, healthy, and full life.

Definition of Terms

Homosexuality is generally defined in two ways: (1) the manifestation of sexual desire toward a member of one's own sex, and (2) erotic activity with a member of one's own sex.

In the definition of a homosexual, the distinction between the inclination toward (orientation) and the practice of (behavior) homosexuality is essential to keep in mind throughout this paper.

Current Question

Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney and other governmental and military leaders have been under pressure to change the current policy which excludes homosexuals from military service. For example, the *News Tribune* of Tacoma, Washington published a story on June 5, 1992 concerning Seattle Mayor Norm Rice's criticism "equating the military's ban on homosexuals with racial segregation." In a written response to Mayor Rice, General Colin Powell pointed out: "Skin color is a benign, non-behavioral characteristic. . . . Comparison of the two is a convenient but invalid statement."

Flawed Argumentation

The fundamental flaw found in the argumentation allowing homosexuals to serve in the military is the failure to distinguish correctly and to recognize the relationship between "sexual *orientation*" and "sexual *behavior.*" Supporters of a change in the current DOD policy argue that just as blacks and women experienced discrimination in the past, so too are homosexuals discriminated against today by being excluded from military service. In advancing this argument, however, they fail to acknowledge that being black or a woman relates to personhood, which is a nonbehavioral trait quite distinct from homosexual behavior. Even if it may be shown that some homosexuals have an orientation that they have not chosen, it is fair to state that homosexual behavior is in fact "a choice," and one that most people do not view as normal conduct either for themselves or their sons and daughters in or out of the military.

In any case, practicing homosexuals today more frequently do not consider their orientation a private matter, but are inclined to seek public affirmation for their lifestyle. It can be argued that the deliberate manifestation by word or deed of one's homosexual orientation marks the beginning of behavioral change because the announcement itself is the demand for a social infrastructure to support the behavior.

While the military does not seek to discriminate

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unjustly, it believes for a number of sound reasons that persons with a homosexual orientation could experience difficulty in controlling their behavior in light of the unique circumstances of military life. Unlike living conditions in most civilian circumstances, private moments are few or nonexistent on a ship or in a deployed status. As Secretary Cheney has noted on previous occasions, the line between public and private for those who wear the uniform is very thin indeed.

In *Steffan v. Cheney*, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia ruled on December 19, 1991 in favor of the Secretary of Defense. The judge noted that "In the Military Establishment . . . the policy of separating men and women when sleeping, bathing, and 'using the bathroom' seeks to maintain the privacy of officers and the enlisted while in certain cases of undress. The embarrassment of being naked as between the sexes is prevalent because sometimes the other is considered to be a sexual object. The quite rational assumption in the Navy is that with no one present who has a homosexual orientation, men and women alike can undress, sleep, bathe, and use the bathroom without fear or embarrassment that they are being viewed as sexual objects."

Serious Questions to Consider

Critics of the current DOD policy question the validity of the arguments used by the military to justify the exclusion of homosexuals from its ranks. These critics should be prepared to answer some questions that might be raised by military personnel whose lives would be affected by a policy change.

1. It appears ironic to military personnel that some lawmakers who have been outspoken in regard to problems of sexual harassment in the military are in some cases the same lawmakers who endorse homosexuals serving in those same armed forces. Would these lawmakers be comfortable with having a seventeen-year-old son billeted in a three-man barracks room with two homosexuals for a four-year tour of duty? How might the son himself feel about this arrangement?

2. Given the uniquely close living and working conditions of military life (e.g., on ship or in the barracks), how would the admission of acknowledged homosexuals into the military affect recruitment and retention?

3. The military services, with their predominantly young male population, would pose a major challenge to gay men who might wish to arrest their behavior. On the other hand, would the military not be an attractive occupation for homosexuals who see no reason to restrict that same behavior?

4. In light of what some would argue is an "innate orientation," would it be wise for a liquor store manager to hire an alcoholic who does not see that condition as a problem and is not, therefore, working toward recovery?

5. How might we expect a heterosexual to behave if he/she occupied a small room with an attractive person of the opposite sex on a ship deployed at sea for six months?

6. If homosexuals were allowed to serve in the military and occupy the same quarters, how does a commanding officer respond to the charge that, by allowing homosexuals to room together, he is discriminating against heterosexuals if he denies them as unmarried men and women the similar right of sharing the same quarters?

Unfortunately, these are but a few questions which opponents of the current DOD policy do not wish to consider.

Statistics

The number of homosexuals in society is uncertain. Popular estimates vary between 5 percent and 10 percent. The 10 percent claim goes back to Alfred Kinsey's 1948 book *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, in which it is stated that "10 percent of the males are more or less exclusively homosexual for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55." On the same page, however, Kinsey states that "4 percent of the white males are exclusively homosexual throughout their lives after adolescence." For political reasons, gay rights activists prefer to quote the 10 percent over the 4 percent statistic. Since the publication of Kinsey's work, the accuracy of his survey has been questioned by many researchers. A more recent 1990 survey of more than 10,000 persons by the National Center for Health Statistics indicates that homosexuals and bisexuals combined amount to approximately 1.5 percent of the population.[1]

A recent Government Accounting Office (GAO) report, *Defense Force Management: DOD's Policy on Homosexuality*, noted statistics regarding the number of homosexuals that have been discharged from the military. Opponents of the current DOD policy like to quote this report in regard to the amount of money reported to have been expended in discharging homosexuals. DOD critics give the impression that homosexuals are separated simply because of a discovered nonthreatening orientation. Having counseled personnel accused of homosexual behavior and having reviewed cases involving charges of homosexuality, I have yet to come across a case where a person was discharged who denied having engaged in homosexual conduct. Conse-

[1]Deborah Dawson, "AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for January-March 1990: Provisional Data from the National Health Interview Survey"; Joseph F. Fittle and Marcie Cynamon, ibid. for April-June 1990; Pamela F. Adams and Ann M. Hardy, ibid. for July-September 1990, in Advance Data, nos. 193, 195, and 198, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p. 11 in all three documents.

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quently, the amount of money expended on separating people because of homosexual behavior would not decrease, but would *increase* if homosexuals were admitted.

There are a number of other statistics that the GAO report did not include. The following are but a few that should be considered in the current discussion:

1. Statistics give evidence of widespread sexual compulsiveness among homosexual men. A recent University of Chicago survey revealed that for the U.S. population as a whole, the estimated number of sex partners beyond age 18 is 7.15 (8.67 for those never married). These numbers stand in striking contrast to the results of a major study by the Kinsey Institute which revealed that 43 percent of the homosexual men surveyed estimated that they had sex with 500 or more partners; 28 percent with 1,000 or more partners. In the same study, 79 percent of white male homosexuals surveyed said that more than half of their partners were strangers. Seventy percent said more than half of their sexual partners were men with whom they had sex only once.[2]

2. Since the onset of AIDS, there does not appear to be a significant decrease in homosexual partnering behavior. In one study in the mid-1980s, the average number of different partners allegedly fell from 70 to 50 per year; in another study, the number was allegedly reduced from 76 to 47 per year.[3]

3. Homosexual men are six times more likely to have attempted suicide than are heterosexual men.

4. Studies indicate that between 25 and 35 percent of homosexual men and women are alcoholics.[4]

5. In a survey reported by the American Public Health Association, 78 percent of the gay respondents reported that they have been affected by a sexually transmitted disease at least one time.[5]

6. According to a San Francisco survey reported in *Time* magazine, 46 percent of the homosexuals interviewed who were between ages eighteen and twenty-five had engaged in anal intercourse without a condom within the previous month—despite the threat of AIDS.[6]

7. The latest figures available from the Centers for Disease Control show that two-thirds of all AIDS cases are directly attributable to homosexual conduct.[7] The percentage of homosexuals infected with the HIV virus continues to rise. According to Dr. Robert Redfield, chief of the Retrovirology Laboratory at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, 50 percent of male homosexuals in San Francisco are now infected with the HIV virus that causes AIDS, up from 7 percent in the early 1980s.[8] One does not need a medical degree to recognize that admitting homosexuals into the military would bring about an increase in the number of AIDS cases and would put additional financial and personnel strains on military medicine, which must contend with a declining military budget and the challenge of recruiting and retaining sufficient medical personnel.

Conclusion

American society is experiencing the concurrent phenomena of increasing sensitivity regarding human rights accompanied by growing rejection of sexual morality. The movement to approve homosexual conduct as an acceptable lifestyle is not surprising in today's permissive society.

Military leaders influence the formation of attitudes in their subordinates, and not only their words but their example can profoundly affect the direction and lives of those whom they lead. This fact was articulated by General John Lejeune, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, who noted that "a large portion of those enlisting are under twenty-one years of age" and "are in a very formative period of their lives." "We owe it to them, to their parents, and to the nation that when discharged from the service they should be far better physically, mentally, and morally than when they enlisted." Today when more militant and vocal homosexuals are advocating that homosexuality should be included in sex education courses as an acceptable alternative to marriage, military personnel themselves and parents of young service men and women cannot help but be concerned about this matter. Legislators and military leaders have a legitimate role to play in checking the spread of

[2]Alan P. Bell and Martin S. Weinberg, *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978), p. 308.

[3]S. A. Stewart, *USA Today*, November 21, 1984; L. McKusick et al., "AIDS and Sexual Behavior Reported by Gay Men in San Francisco," *American Journal of Public Health*, 1985, pp. 193-96.

[4]Robert J. Kus, "Alcoholics Anonymous and Gay American Men," *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1987), p. 254.

[5]Enrique T. Rueda, *The Homosexual Network* (Old Greenwich, Conn.: Devin Adair, 1982), p. 53.

[6]Dick Thompson, "A Losing Battle with AIDS," *Time*, July 2, 1990, p. 43.

[7]"HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report," Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Infectious Disease, Division of HIV/AIDS, January 1992, p. 9. The health and welfare threat of AIDS was a factor in the *Steffan v. Cheney* ruling in favor of the current DOD policy. The judge wrote: "There is another justification for the policy of excluding homosexuals from service in the United States Armed Forces. . . . [F]ar and away the highest risk category for those who are HIV-positive, a population who will with a high degree of medical certainty one day contract AIDS, is homosexual men."

[8]Family Research Council (Robert G. Morrison, editor), "The Last Bastion," *Washington Watch*, June 1992, p. 1.

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homosexual behavior, especially among young people whose minds and characters are in formative stages.

In summary, the DOD homosexual exclusion policy is designed to preserve, promote, and protect legitimate military interests, which include the personal privacy rights of service members. Discussions with active-duty personnel whose lives would be affected by a policy change give evidence that recruitment of avowed homosexuals could erode morale and have a negative impact on recruitment and retention. Just as universities do not require women to share rooms and showers with men in college dormitories, heterosexual personnel should not be forced to interact with homosexuals without recourse to other living arrangements available to most civilians. Just as the military excludes persons because of physical handicap or age for the good of the individuals themselves and those with whom they would serve, so too is the military justified in excluding homosexuals from its ranks. While opponents of the current DOD policy prefer to avoid the issue of behavior and instead to present homosexuality as a nonthreatening orientation, the fact is that lifelong, or even career-long, celibacy among those with homosexual orientation is a rare exception rather than the rule. In this period of history, when militant homosexuals not only reveal their liaisons and lifestyles but actively and articulately promote the homosexual relationship as a morally acceptable alternative to marriage, legislation that would require the military to accept homosexuals would do much more to violate the rights of heterosexual military personnel than it would to promote the rights of homosexuals. Consequently, in light of the multiple reasons noted above, legislation that would reverse the current DOD homosexual exclusion policy should not be enacted.

Tokyo Rain

With our cameras and crumpled clothes
we wait for the bus. We rush to each
"beauty spot" through narrow streets,
observing signs whose alphabet we fail
to comprehend.

Pretty girls are scattered like rain.
We pass students on bikes, old people
stooped over bundles. The new "good life"
of Japan smiles at us from Coke posters
on rundown store fronts. Dingy flats
and factories crowd the roads, relieved
briefly by ragged patches of green
and graceful shrines.

Although he tries to make things clear,
the guide is mechanical and tired.
The bus windows are splattered with
rain and each of us is deep in
murky water.

B. R. Strahan

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Books In Review

Judaism and Postmodernity

Renewing the Covenant: A Theology for the Postmodern Jew. By Eugene Borowitz. *Jewish Publication Society. 319 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by **Alan L. Mittleman**

Eugene Borowitz, the leading theologian associated with the Reform movement of American Judaism, has written an important and ambitious book. *Renewing the Covenant: A Theology for the Postmodern Jew* is the culmination of Borowitz's long theological journey out of religious liberalism by way of existentialist personalism. One of the young theologians deeply affected by the importation to the United States of German-Jewish thought (e.g., Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber) after the Second World War, Borowitz has long helped to redefine the terrain of Jewish theology in America. That redefinition, begun by Will Herberg in the postwar years, learned much not only from the German Jews but from Protestant theologians such as Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, and the Niebuhr brothers as well. American Jewish theology, primarily in a non-Orthodox mode, became under their collective impact less humanistic and more theocentric, less universalistic and more particularist, less optimistic about the human condition and more inclined to take seriously such pre-liberal concepts as "evil" and "sin."

In the present work, Borowitz struggles to complete the transformation of non-Orthodox Judaism from a modern (i.e., individualistic, humanistic, highly secularized) religion to a "postmodern" one. This does involve a kind of squaring of the circle. Borowitz attempts to retain some constitutively modern emphases of the Judaism of the last two hundred years (such as the morally autonomous self) while at the same time moving that Judaism toward a new appropriation of premodern elements. This eclecticism is part of what Borowitz means by "postmodern," and its inherently self-contradictory nature makes for certain limitations and frustrations.

The term—"postmodern"—has come into prominence since the mid-1970s, although it apparently originated in 1917 in the writings of a German disciple of Nietzsche named Rudolf Pannwitz. Pannwitz used "postmodern" to refer to a new type of man ("athletically hardened, nationalistically conscious, militarily trained, religiously exalted") who could negate the prevailing character of modernity which he took to be decadent nihilism. Since then, despite the diversity of uses to which the term has been put, "postmodern" seems generally to imply a new openness to the uses of the past. If modernity sought to conquer, control, and banish the past, the advocates of postmodernity recognize the hubris and futility of that project and seek to allow traditions some sway over the present and future. There is nothing necessarily benign in this, however, as the citation from Pannwitz chillingly conveys. For postmoderns, the traditions of the past do not acquire privileged status owing to their wisdom; rather, they are merely interesting because of their difference, their ironic novelty. Thus the postmodern appropriation of the past differs from conservatism by its playful, aesthetic temperment, its posture of irony, its disregard of boundaries and distinctions (taken to be mere conventions), and its epistemological post-foundationalism. Postmoderism mocks modernity's (or antiquity's, for that matter) projects of philosophic universalism and social engineering, and urges us to view all truth as local, all discourse as conversation, and all dreams of social melioration as bad faith or bad form.

For his part, Borowitz distances himself from the nihilistic overtones of postmodernism. (Can one dismiss them so easily?) His sanguine and optimistic embrace of postmodernism is limited to its critique of modern universalism. As he sees it, postmodern consciousness makes space for particularisms, for local versions of meaning and truth. In line with this turn from philosophy to rhetoric, from universal reason to particular persuasion, Borowitz styles himself a "non-rationalist." He speaks a truth founded only on his own and his community's experience, eschewing the allegedly universalist-rationalist discourse underwritten by modernity.

The problem specific to Jewish modernity, in his view, is that Jews had to become primarily universal men and women and secondarily Jews. This reduced Jewish being and Jewish action to an option (a "lifestyle choice") for the generic, universal-human self. Given the primacy of this autonomous self (what Alasdair MacIntyre calls the "unsituated self"), there are no grounds other than private preference for undertaking Jewish duties. There is, however, no Judaism without "Jewish duty," Borowitz's Kantian-sounding nomenclature for the traditional Jewish preoccupation with *mitzvot* (commandments). Borowitz's task is to ground a theory of Jewish duty that is stronger than that supported by modern liberal Judaism, yet weaker than the stark heteronomy of Orthodoxy has demanded. He finds his solution in the concept of a Jewish self that is still autonomous yet constituted by its Jewishness far more significantly than heretofore.

Most modern Jewish thinkers, recognizing the modern condition of the Jewish self as an autono-

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mous, unsituated self, have presented a host of strategic arguments for why emancipated, universalized Jews might want to choose Jewishness and Judaism as options. Orthodoxy, on the other hand, has refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the autonomous self, and urged Jews to think of themselves as heteronomous selves, that is as selves who must define themselves as obedient to Jewish law. Borowitz rejects the Orthodox stratagem both for its heteronomy, that is, its alienation of private conscience by systematic deference to an allegedly divine law, and also for its view of revelation. He does not want to sacrifice conscience, nor can he believe that the Torah per se is God's speech. In his retention of an historicistic appreciation of biblical religion, we see his commitment to an essentially modern perspective, yet he also rejects the modern, liberal version of the autonomous self. Unlike all of his modern predecessors, therefore, he does not urge Jews to choose Judaism as a "lifestyle." He has a more subtle line of attack.

WHAT Borowitz argues, echoing such communitarian thinkers as Michael Sandel, is that the modern self is, at any rate, a fiction. One need not appeal to a radically individualized, unconstituted self because it does not, to begin with, exist. For a postmodernist leery of any claim to universalism, the self is understood not as a discrete atom but as a function of its particular attachments. For Borowitz, the self of the Jew is a radically, fundamentally Jewish self. Jewishness is not secondary but constitutive, primary to the Jew. Yet what is the content of this Jewishness? For Borowitz it is necessarily religious. Closely following Martin Buber's existentialist personalism, he understands that self to discover itself in the encounter with God. Furthermore, for the Jew that encounter of I and Thou (and therefore of the self with its truest self, of I with I) is mediated by the situation of the self in the Jewish people. Borowitz reappropriates the ancient notion of covenant to refer to this embeddedness of the Jewish self within both the Jewish people (past, present, and future) and a personal/collective encounter with God. Unlike Buber, Borowitz sees dramatic normative consequences issuing from being-in-covenant. The Jewish self, knowing itself to exist solely because of its covenantal situation, is oriented toward a life of Jewish duty. That duty will include some of the traditional laws and customs, but it will also expand to include the imperatives of the recast, newly expanded, yet still autonomous conscience.

Borowitz has synthesized contemporary communitarian social philosophy with the Jewish existentialist tradition. From communitarianism, he derives the communally constituted, situated self, laying to rest all Jewish versions of a Rawlsian veil of ignorance. Following the existentialists, he eschews rationalist philosophical/theological argument and looks to personal experience as the medium of revelation and principle source of truth. He writes throughout of his intuitions of transcendence and knowledge of divine presence yet of his inability to prove or even to articulate this reality clearly. This deep faith marks his work off from that of secular postmodernists and prevents a slide into nihilism. Yet his determined effort to avoid rational argument causes, it seems to me, numerous problems.

Reliance on religious experience ought to be buttressed by argument, such as that put forward by Rudolf Otto for instance, for the a priori, non-reductive character of that experience. Borowitz does argue that modern skepticism has undermined our receptivity to transcendence. But this seriously begs the question as to the reality of divine transcendence or of the experience of it in the first place.

A more serious problem is that of warrants for the various claims Borowitz makes about transcendence. The Jewish experience of transcendence in his view issues in covenantal obligations. But why should transcendence have normative consequences, either of a particular kind or, for that matter, at all? Is this allegedly necessary normativeness on the side of the transcendent or on the side of the human percipient? If on the side of the latter, isn't normativity ascriptive and therefore relative? To put it a different way, why must Judaism be about duty in general or about duties of particular kinds? Borowitz seems to presuppose some unarticulated "essence of Judaism" model that ought to be fleshed out and defended.

While he begins with a cautious reluctance about using the term "God," freighted as it is with associations, and prefers the more elusive term "transcendence," before long he throws caution to the wind and returns to a full-orbed traditional discourse about God. Yet how seriously are we to take this? Referring to traditional God-talk as myth and to covenant as metaphor, his fideistic voice is often undercut by his modern critical or postmodern ironic one. In a work so redolent with conviction, these different levels of discourse create a disturbing sense of incoherence. All of these considerations lead one to hope that he will pursue the grounding of his views in subsequent works. "Grounding," however, is not a postmodern forte. To the extent that he is serious about his postmodernity, he will probably not pursue these issues at the level of argument.

ONE FINAL CRITICISM. This is a work about Jewish duty and obligation: Borowitz has seized upon the "metaphor" of covenant to capture both the personal dimension of loving intimacy with God and the social sphere in which duty is actualized. But the emphasis on deontological language ("duty," "obligation") seems somewhat unfortunate. Michael Sandel has argued that Kant's elevation of deontological language over earlier moral discourses of the common good or the ends of life narrowed

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the horizon of liberalism. A Jewish exploration of alternative frameworks ought not be qualified by this modernist limitation. More specifically, liberalism spoke of the rightness of actions or the rights of persons while declining to postulate a vision of the good life within which judgments of right make sense. By treating covenant in a highly selective manner, Borowitz does not allow the conflict between covenantal and liberal ways of thinking to play itself out.

Thus, the extent to which "covenant" is allowed to function as a social principle in Borowitz's thought is disturbing. His conception of covenant is overly existential and insufficiently sociopolitical. Daniel Elazar has argued that covenant is not primarily a metaphor for personal relationship with God and then only secondarily a way of structuring community in which individuals actualize that I-Thou relationship. On this view, freedom remains primarily negative: freedom from *entanglements* and obligations. However much Borowitz tries to free himself from this paradigm, he is still, it seems to me, committed to it.

The alternative view constructs covenant as the consensual ground of a community's constitution and institutions. Indeed, covenant implies choice of a certain kind: consent to political obligation. On this view, freedom is understood as the liberty to fulfill the demands of the covenant, what the Puritans refered to as "federal liberty." Once one enters into the covenant, one's negative liberty has distinct limits. Given such a moral system, typically liberal talk of rights recedes and a shared discourse of the common good arises.

If Judaism is about covenant, then it is in equal measure about consent to obligations not all of which could ever pass muster before the bar of the individual moral conscience however situated or expanded. In our consent to the laws of our American polity, we accept much we disapprove of and dissent from. Nonetheless we consent and belong. The same is true of the Jewish polity. A truly covenantal understanding would move the discussion of Jewish belonging and obligation in a more political or theo-political direction in which the accent of existentialist personalism would be muted. Freedom thus construed would mean primarily the opportunity to participate in the covenant community and to fulfil its norms in concert with others.

From a modern point of view, this version of covenant gives rise to a variety of moral discomforts. But it has the virtue of forcing the issue between the political foundations of the covenantal Jewish polity and that of the modern liberal order. Consideration of the political cast of covenant might help in a renewal of the concept to which Eugene Borowitz so effectively calls American Jewry. Nevertheless, this work deserves to be at the center of American Jewish discussion for years to come. If one may be permitted such premodern terms, one can only hope that this is not Professor Borowitz's magnum opus, but his prolegomenon.

Taking Dialogue Seriously

THE DIVERSITY OF RELIGIONS: A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE. BY J. A. DINOIA, O.P. *Catholic University Press. 200pp. $29.95 cloth, $17.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **Roger Kimball**

WE LIVE AT an odd moment. One mark of that oddness is the corruption of words that name important virtues. "Diversity," for example, these days often turns out to be little more than a code word for intellectual gerrymandering, while "tolerance" appears largely as a synonym for trivialization and moral complacency. It is one of the chief merits of J. A. DiNoia's new book on the diversity of religions to remind us that such terms are not entirely bankrupt. He shows that, in thinking about religion, we may still appeal to diversity and tolerance without requiring a moratorium on personal commitment or critical intelligence. DiNoia, a Dominican priest who teaches at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C., is concerned in this short book partly with the nature of religious truth, partly with prerequisites for constructive dialogue among persons of different faiths. His guiding ambition, he writes in his preface, is to "affirm Christian confidence in the universality of salvation in a way that [gives] full value to the diversity of aims of life and subsequent patterns of life commended by other religious communities."

It is the thoughtful union of these two things—affirmation of a particular position joined with the frank and open recognition of alternatives—that makes *The Diversity of Religions* an important contribution to contemporary reflection on the cogency of religious commitment. All too often today, in religious matters as well as elsewhere, the desire to be intellectually ecumenical and nondiscriminatory results in a vacuous pluralism. "Diversity" is purchased at the expense of truth. Real differences of opinion and conviction are papered over in the name of tolerance. Unfortunately, what one achieves thereby is not tolerance but critical stupefaction. The deep divisions that separate people cannot be wished out of existence simply by repeating the mantra of diversity: anaesthetizing our powers of judgment creates more problems than it solves. As DiNoia notes in his first chapter:

> The Christian claim that there is no salvation except through Jesus Christ, or the Buddhist claim that there is no attainment of Nirvana ex-

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> cept in the following of the Excellent Eightfold Path, reflects not an unwarranted exclusivism on the part of these communities but the seriousness with which each regards the true aim of life and the means necessary to attain and enjoy it.

Genuine tolerance, it turns out, requires the assertion of one's own convictions about the truth no less than the acknowledgement of other points of view. Otherwise what one achieves is not dialogue but a series of more or less isolated monologues. That may nurture warm feelings, but it also encourages dishonesty and intellectual sloth.

AS WITH ANY BOOK, it is important to recognize at the outset what *The Diversity of Religions* does *not* attempt to deal with as well as what it does deal with. Its primary aim is to establish the intellectual ground rules for fruitful discussion among religions, not to defend religion itself against the criticisms of secular philosophy. It is perhaps an open question whether intra-religious conversation is, as DiNoia puts it, "more challenging" today than the battle against skepticism. But there can be no doubt that he is fully aware of the corrosive effects that secularism has had on religious life in the modern age. Acknowledging the situation, he quotes this poignant passage from John Updike's novel *Roger's Version*:

> In the sixteenth century astronomy, in the seventeenth century microbiology, in the eighteenth geology and paleontology, in the nineteenth Darwin's biology all grotesquely extended the world-frame and sent churchmen scurrying for cover in ever smaller, shadowy nooks, little gloomy ambiguous caves in the psyche where even now neurology is cruelly harrying them, gouging them out of the multifolded brain like wood lice from under a lumber pile.

The argument of *The Diversity of Religions* neither concedes nor rebuts the familiar picture that Updike has sketched in this melancholy paragraph. Rather, it proceeds alongside it, focusing on the language and commitments of professed believers.

DiNoia concentrates primarily on the logic, as distinct from the history or development, of various religious doctrines. Most of his examples compare and contrast Christianity with Buddhism, but he also makes frequent reference to Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism. In its baldest form, the problem he deals with is the problem of how a given religion can recognize the claims of other religions while still asserting the truth of its own central beliefs. Traditionally, most major religions, at least in their orthodox versions, have presented themselves as being in unique possession of the truth about what DiNoia calls, in a phrase that occurs frequently in this book, "the true aim of life."

Nirvana for the Buddhist, the beatific vision for the Christian, submission to the will of Allah for the Muslim, etc.: prima facie, anyway, these are very different, perhaps irreconcilable, conceptions of the "true aim of life." Attainment of nirvana requires the extirpation of desire and the setting aside of the self; for the Christian, salvation involves the fulfillment of desire in the personal enjoyment of the *visione dei*. Moreover, most major religions in their orthodox versions present themselves as providing privileged access to the truth that they proclaim: the Dharma for the Buddhist, the teachings of Christ for the Christian, the Koran for the Muslim. Not only the definition of what counts as "the true aim of life," but also the prescription for its attainment—the modes of life enjoined for adherents—differ radically from one religion to another. There is the further complication that some religions—Judaism, for example—do not seem to include anything like what Christians call "salvation" in their conception of the "true aim of life." Given these differences, how is real tolerance or conversation, as opposed to polite indifference, possible?

DINOIA BEGINS by outlining some typical strategies that Christians have adopted for dealing with these issues. The oldest and most obvious strategy—though hardly one calculated to encourage dialogue—is to dissolve the problem by insisting on the truth of Christianity to the exclusion of other religions. Typically, this amounts to the idea that salvation requires explicit faith in Christ prior to death. The "exclusivist" option is not much in favor these days, and DiNoia mentions it—usually preceded by the word "arrogant" or some other negative epithet—only to dismiss it as inappropriate. "Faith in God's all-embracing providential care for the human race," he writes near the end of his first chapter, "would seem to require of Christian communities that they admit that their own traditions could not have a monopoly on religious truth and virtue." (In an aside, DiNoia points out that the notorious medieval doctrine of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—"There is no salvation outside the Church"—is not as draconian as it sounds: among other things, it applied primarily not to Christians but, in the words of one scholar whom DiNoia quotes, "to those who have separated themselves from the church voluntarily" by heresy or schism.)

DiNoia describes the other main strategies for dealing with religious diversity as "inclusivist" or "pluralist." Inclusivists hold that all religions *implicitly* aim at the salvation that Christianity proclaims, even though their adherents may be unaware of the fact. Pluralists go one step further. They hold that all religious communities aim at transcendence of some sort, but that the nature of this transcendence is essentially ineffable. Particular religions, the pluralists claim, are by their very nature inadequate,

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culture-bound attempts to conceptualize something beyond conceptualization.

The inclusivist option has a long history, going back to some church fathers. Nicholas of Cusa's *De pace fidei*, written soon after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, is a classic example of the genre. Cusa presents a Greek, a Turk, a Jew, and others discussing the diversity of religious belief, only to conclude that "this diversity is reducible to the worship of one God," and a triune God at that.

The pluralist option also has a long history, and it has become especially popular in recent decades as many theologians have come to fear nothing more than the accusation of being narrow-minded. Unlike the inclusivist, who tends to keep his critical powers intact, the pluralist prefers to close his eyes and murmur exquisitely vague formulations about the goal of religion. John Hick's notion of "Reality-centeredness" is one recent example (capital letters are typically called upon to do a lot of work for the pluralist), Paul Tillich's once-famous, still vapid, existential slogan, "ultimate concern," is another.

ONE OF THE chief aims of *The Diversity of Religions* is to steer a course between the exclusivist position on the one hand and the inclusivist and pluralist options on the other. If exclusivism is unwarrantedly dogmatic, inclusivism and pluralism are unacceptably indeterminate. And the latter two, DiNoia notes, "tend to divorce what in most religious traditions are understood to be inseparable," i.e., belief and practice.

The inclusivist indulges in the irritating shell game, perfected by Freudians and Marxists, of refusing to take things on their own terms: what seems to be an innocent friendship is "really" a relationship fraught with sexual tension; what seems to be a purely artistic phenomenon is "really" an expression of exploitative economic relations, etc. In religious matters, this interpretive gambit works by reinterpreting any given expression of religious life in terms of some previously accepted paradigm. "In effect," DiNoia writes, "such accounts assert that the adherents of other traditions attain through [their own traditions] not the aim defined and fostered by their distinctive patterns of life but that fostered by the Christian pattern of life." The Buddhist monk might think he is aiming at nirvana, but "really" he is aiming at personal union with Christ. This patronizing attitude is not tolerance but a caricature of tolerance. "It cannot," DiNoia observes, "be truly respectful of the doctrines and lives of the members of other religious communities to attribute to them the unwitting pursuit of the aim of life

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as one defines it in one's own community."

The pluralist position is even more problematic. For if inclusivists tend to reduce one thing to something else, pluralists are happy to wallow in a cozy vagueness. In a Christian context, DiNoia notes in a phrase that deserves greater currency, the pluralist position amounts to "christological minimalism." It is also an admission of epistemological despair. DiNoia is unfailingly polite, but his criticism is devastating. "To say that religions aim at 'ultimacy' or at 'reality,'" he writes, "is to state an aim of such generality as to fail entirely to describe what actually transpires in religious communities." Moreover, the pluralist forfeits the authority to say anything about the truth of the ideas he espouses. As DiNoia notes, "If religious doctrines expressing predications are in principle construed as failing to assert anything definitive about that which is transcendent, then there is no point in debating the truth of religious doctrines expressing contradictory or even just different accounts of it." In this sense, pluralist talismans such as "ultimate concern" and "Reality-centeredness" may be best understood as prophylactic devices employed to forestall specific judgments about the content of religious life: I'm OK, you're OK.

In criticizing the failings of inclusivism and pluralism, DiNoia seeks to make room for a view of religious diversity that does justice to the distinctness and integrity of different religious traditions while at the same time leaving open the possibility of salvation for non-Christians. Drawing on the work of Yale theologian George Lindbeck and others, DiNoia proposes as an alternative the idea of "prospective salvation," which projects "the moment of experienced salvation into the time of death or beyond death."

IN ESSENCE, the notion of prospective salvation is a variation on the idea of Purgatory. DiNoia admits that this use of the doctrine of Purgatory may seem like trying "to resolve one set of difficulties with a proposal infinitely more problematic." But he notes, to begin with, that Purgatory need not be thought of "as a place or duration, and certainly not a punishment by fire." What is crucial is the idea that certain modes of life render one unfit for the *immediate* enjoyment of salvation: an additional experience of purification or transformation is required. The idea of prospective salvation is an attempt to extend the grace implicit in the idea of Purgatory to non-Christians.

At bottom, as DiNoia acknowledges, the idea of prospective salvation looks suspiciously like a version of inclusivism: after all, it is a specifically Christian salvation that is being proposed. But by postponing the decisive moment, the idea of prospective salvation grants an unusual degree of autonomy to other religions even as it preserves a distinctly Christian outlook. Other religions are seen neither as covert forms of Christianity nor as more or less unsatisfactory gesturings towards an ever elusive transcendence. The idea of prospective salvation may thus provide one means of satisfying the demand for diversity and tolerance without sacrificing the particulars of a Christian vision of salvation.

How convincing is the idea of prospective salvation? It is not, I think, entirely clear. What DiNoia presents here is little more than a sketch. He is probably right that it avoids the grosser failings of other inclusivist strategies. But by projecting the denouement of the piece into a moment beyond death, he has not only inoculated the idea against certain criticisms, he may also, as it were, have rendered it hors de combat. In this sense, the idea of prospective salvation does not so much solve as defer the problem that DiNoia sets out to examine.

Stepping back for a moment, it must also be pointed out that his discussion occasionally exhibits some unfortunate stylistic quirks. The most annoying is the accommodation of a certain amount of feminist PC-speak (which was, perhaps, demanded by the publisher). The feminine pronoun, for example, is regularly used where the masculine pronoun is expected, "humankind" replaces "mankind," etc. There is also the matter of "logically speaking," a phrase that occurs with alarming frequency, especially towards the end of the book. As it happens, DiNoia's logic is perfectly sound. But in a book of some 200 pages, more than a handful of *logically speakings* are bound to strike the reader as gratuitous or worse.

Near the end of *The Diversity of Religions*, DiNoia describes his book as "deliberately exploratory and hypothetical." Certainly it is a model of intellectual patience and scrupulousness. DiNoia exhibits a rare sensitivity to what we might call the specific gravity of religious language. His criticisms of inclusivist and pluralist positions are at once definitive and fair, his efforts to construct an alternative attractively tentative and open-ended. As someone interested in fostering greater communication among people of different religious beliefs, DiNoia is acutely aware of the dangers of prematurely curtailing discussion. But—what is perhaps rarer in today's latitudinarian atmosphere—he is equally alert to the perils of pretending to a unity that one has not yet achieved. "A theology of religions that assumes the religious unity of humankind by dissolving rather than resolving religious differences," he writes in his conclusion, "seeks prematurely to enjoy an eschatological promise whose fulfillment will come only as a stunning and undeserved gift." Whatever else it is, DiNoia's intelligent and humane study is an excellent preparation for appreciating that gift when and if it is granted.

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Taking Fundamentalism Seriously

FUNDAMENTALISMS OBSERVED. Edited by MARTIN E. MARTY and R. SCOTT APPLEBY. *University of Chicago Press. 872 pp. $40.*

***Reviewed by* S. Mark Heim**

AN EMINENT British scholar of Buddhism took occasion in a recent essay to observe that contemporary Western university students are more likely to be taught about Hinduism than about the variety of Christian denominations. He gave one ominous example: "What . . . do our teachers of Christianity know or say about the doctrines and activities of the Southern Baptist Convention of the United States, a denomination with nearly 14.5 million members, most of them active, whose convictions about the inevitability and even desirability of a nuclear holocaust threaten to make our deliberations reach a rather premature conclusion?"

This sentence displays a full measure of the ignorance it deplores. The most perfunctory acquaintance with a cross-section of actual Southern Baptists would give the lie to the notion that they all expect or desire a nuclear holocaust. How much terror might the author have been spared had he but contemplated a past American President named Carter. It is unlikely that this little piece of false witness would have been delivered with such complacency had its objects not been classed as fundamentalists. When it comes to people perceived as fundamentalists, otherwise scrupulous academics often find it quite natural to dispense with nuance.

Fundamentalisms Observed, edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, is the first installment in an extensive project undertaken to redress past scholarly indifference and/or flippancy. In the end there will be six hefty volumes dealing with the effects of fundamentalisms, the reasons for their rise, the elements common to them, and the implications of all this for public policy. The present volume provides extensive parallel accounts of fundamentalism, or approximations of it, in traditions ranging from Roman Catholicism to Japanese "new religions" and from Islam to Theravadan Buddhism. Each chapter is a monograph stressing historical and phenomenological description rather than extensive analysis.

Readers may occasionally find the description overwhelming. Eighty dense pages on the Gush Emunim movement as "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," or nearly as many on the Jamaat-i-Islami in South Asia might not be everyone's cup of tea. But the detail is rich: simply to follow the stories of some of these movements is fascinating. There is grist enough for readers to frame their own questions and even their own hypotheses.

A fundamentalism is defined as a counterattack in the name of religious tradition against the forces of modernity, a reaction that selectively recovers portions of the tradition in question while at the same time utilizing modern techniques. It is acknowledged to have a true religious spirit, and to forge a firm identity amidst crisis and change. In its nature, say the editors, a fundamentalism seeks a comprehensive system for human life and so is hostile to isolating religion from social and political life. (Many other features are also suggested, but they amount to little more than sociological truisms: fundamentalisms set boundaries, they exhibit missionary zeal, they "name, dramatize, and even mythologize their enemies," they arise when there is a real crisis or one is perceived (are there actually any other times?).

THE CLEAREST LINE drawn in the book is that between conservative religious movements and fundamentalisms. Substantively, of course, they may be identical; what seals a group's identity as fundamentalist in the view of most of the book's contributors is the decision to fight back, the refusal to acknowledge that modernity has won. The true hallmark is the conviction, at once quaint and frightening to outside observers, that the alternative vision, whether it be a Muslim society or a messianic state, can be fulfilled. It seems safe to say that the project of which this book is a part would never have come into being had the balance not been tipped from the quaint to the frightening side. Fundamentalism has forced its way onto the scholarly agenda by taking on an unmistakable significance in the public world of politics and culture. College students, we are told by the editors, now need to know about the phenomenon: "Some of them may even be fending off military and terrorist movements by fundamentalist extremists some day." Perhaps equally pertinent to this project, fundamentalist militancy is displayed in the formation of "an integrated system that does not readily yield to the compartmentalizing tendencies of the modern social sciences."

It is hard to leave this book without reflecting on the methodology behind it, particularly since it appears with the impressive imprimatur of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. What sort of things are "fundamentalisms" and how should they be studied? The book does shy away from treating them as straightforward pathologies, analogous, say, to some cross-religious study titled "Racisms Observed." There is a genuinely serious effort to recognize an authentic religious dimension in all the movements the book treats. Are we then, methodologically, dealing with other peoples' religious faiths and should the requisite methods be those increasingly standard in religious studies—i.e., requiring not only empathy but dialogue, not only observation from outside but

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authentic voices from within? In other words, should fundamentalists themselves be included in the endeavor? As the title itself would suggest, the answer seems to be no. Such an idea was considered, the editors tell us in their introduction, but it was rejected on the grounds that the contributors made it their business to "take the interests of the fundamentalists into consideration." One could hardly imagine a five-year project on monasticism or women in the religions, say, that would straight-facedly introduce itself with an analogous statement.

That fundamentalism should be approached so gingerly is understandable. If the scholarly study of religion today inclines more to an ideal of empathetic appreciation than to one of pure objectivity, fundamentalism is the prickly case that defeats any pretense either of empathy or objectivity. As one of the contributors, Winston Davis, says with admirable frankness, "I do believe that fundamentalism in its pure form is a potential threat to the kind of open, democratic society in which I hope to live and raise my children." To use the word fundamentalism "inevitably raises the problem of the fairness and/or bias of scholars who use it." But, he continues, "to appreciate a religion is not necessarily the best or only way to understand it."

CONDEMNATION is rarely so strongly commended as a mode of understanding in interreligious inquiry. As the religions one need not fear to judge, fundamentalisms expose an uneasily normative side of religious scholarship. The liberal, democratic society which is to be relativized through serious attention to other religions and other cultures must, insofar as it is the presupposition of the study itself, finally be the ruling value. Contemporary religious scholarship is used to responding to the moral challenge from its subjects, "By what right do you make us objects of your observation?" with a disclaimer of any dominating intent: study, say the scholars, is undertaken to rectify our own distorted perspective, to benefit us with new insights, to enhance our appreciation of the integral reality of others' traditions and thus undergird our respect for them. Fundamentalisms by their very nature make it difficult for observers to affirm this objective with integrity.

Fundamentalists are generally regarded as people who have not yet understood that there are arguments with knock-down cultural force that forbid appeals to substantive divine inspiration or ontological grounding. That this general idea may not comport well with a full understanding of fundamentalism is the welcome recognition that underlies the whole project. That the book speaks of "fundamentalisms" in the plural itself suggests that the term encompasses a wide diversity, and it is one of the virtues of this book that it demonstrates this. To note but one example, the useful chapter on Hinduism dispels the notion that a fundamentalistic Hinduism is a contradiction in terms, and yet illustrates the differences between such a movement, whose extremity lies primarily in not letting any insiders out, and, say, an Islamic one that seeks ultimately to bring all human society in.

Indeed, so well is this diversity described, and so supple is the definition of fundamentalism, that one wonders finally why the circle has been drawn in quite the limited way it has. It is clear that Christian and Islamic fundamentalism are the paradigm cases for the project: without them in the first place there would be no effort to search out their correlatives. The search sometimes seems a bit forced. Tu Weiming's stimulating piece on Confucian revival is explicitly dubious about how well his subject fits the theme, preferring to speak broadly of "the search for roots" as part of a "fundamentalist quest." This willingness to look to the farthest shores, using watered definitions of fundamentalism in order to detect trace elements, contrasts oddly with a lack of interest in other candidates nearer home that seem to fit the formal criteria as well or better, from the Catholic Worker movement to Mormonism to the Hari Krishnas to that branch of radical feminism that revives supposed ancient goddess religions.

Be all that as it may, *Fundamentalisms Observed* is a milestone, representing as it does a new seriousness in the discussion of its subjects. Most scholars will no doubt view it under the rubric of "Know your enemy." Some may even regret the way acknowledging the global significance of these movements undermines the tactic of blank dismissal so common in the scholarly world. But this study is a rich resource for a more fruitful generation of questions. It not only tells us more about fundamentalism but challenges us to wonder whether the kind of grounding fundamentalists insist upon may not be an enduring human need and whether a resistant liberal society can itself long dispense with a transcendent grounding. Fundamentalisms are, as the editors say, "a mirror for the Western academy." And the reflection is not an untroubled one.

The Use and Abuse of Freud

FREUDIAN FRAUD: THE MALIGNANT EFFECT OF FREUD'S THEORY ON AMERICAN THOUGHT AND CULTURE. By E. FULLER TORREY, M.D. *HarperCollins. 362 pp. $25.*

Reviewed by Paul C. Vitz

THIS BOOK has its flaws, especially with regard to Freudian thought, but its contributions to our understanding of how Freudian concepts were used to transform American culture are important and largely unknown. E. Fuller Torrey, a psychiatrist, focuses on the ways in which Freudian theory was used by intellectuals in America's cultural

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and political battles. He shows that the major social meaning of Freud for those who made him fashionable in this country was sexual liberation. Early enthusiasts for Freud spoke of the "dangers of sexual abstinence," and psychoanalysts stated that "with a normal sexual life, there is no such thing as a neurotic." Admirers also claimed Freud's theory to be scientific: "If mothers and teachers would utilize psychoanalytic principles in their dealings with children, we could reduce nervous and mental diseases as much as we have smallpox and typhoid."

From the beginning, Freud's American supporters came almost exclusively from the political left. His name was associated with social reform, often of a radical nature—with such figures as Emma Goldman, Max Eastman, Floyd Dell, Walter Lippmann. Sexual and social reform went hand in hand, even before World War I. (The common idea that the New Left of the 1960s—with its emphasis on sexual as well as political liberation—was a radical novelty clearly needs some revising. Free love and socialism have gone together like a horse and carriage since Marx and the Oneida Community.) Apparently sex can be a powerful motivator, driving people into fundamental opposition to the social norms of their society. And conversely, from the start leftists used Freud as a club to break down traditional sexual and social relationships and their associated values.

Torrey takes up the use of Freud's thought in the intense political conflict among communists, socialists, and liberals, on the left, and fascists, racists, and eugenicists, on the right. Freud was brought by the left into the great nature-nurture debate, in demonstration of the idea that sexuality is primarily the result of early childhood experience. This has been an odd role for Freud—with his biological bias—to play. After all, the "Oedipus Complex" and Freud's laying out of the "psychosexual stages" were rooted in biology, not experience. Never mind: Freud was understood to be a friend of the left.

The most eye-opening chapter of the book is "The Sexual Politics of Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead." In it, Torrey shows that the personal sexual preoccupations of the Founding Mothers of social anthropology—Benedict with lesbianism and Mead with free love and bisexuality—so distorted their anthropological research as to make it scientifically worthless. (The Founding Father of the field, Franz Boaz, was also an intellectual father figure for both Mead and Benedict.)

In *Coming of Age in Samoa*, Mead popularized the idea of sexual freedom, especially for the young, claiming that the Samoans had a wonderful, relaxed, non-neurotic, free-love sex life, that they were unaffected by sexual jealousy and were tolerant of extramarital liaisons, etc. (The facts are now known to be quite different.) Further, she argued that it was this tolerance that led to their happiness and lack of sexual neurosis. While Mead was working on this book, she was herself engaged in extramarital affairs, both lesbian and heterosexual. Her recent critics, prominent among them Derek Freeman, have provided evidence that her anthropology was a disguised rationalization of her own behavior—a behavior she wanted the rest of society to adopt. Similar emphases on the plastic or environmentally determined nature of sexual behavior and of sex roles are found in Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, and in other works by both anthropologists.

Torrey describes their scientific contributions as having little value since, "Both women viewed the cultures they studied through prisms tinged with political and personal concerns; as a result, certain features of the cultures became distorted, producing a panoply of peoples who are fundamentally fictitious. Utilized as political treatises, however, their books were effective, for they helped shift the nature-nurture debate toward nurture." Torrey, who writes as a liberal on sexual matters, backs off from censuring Benedict and Mead—and Boas, their mentor, who prided himself on being an objective scientist—and writes, "Such criticisms are valid insofar as the publications of Mead and Benedict are viewed as anthropological works. If they are instead viewed as political efforts to combat racism and promote tolerance for homosexuals, lesbians, and others who are different, then [these books] are seen in a different light." In short, as science these books are serious frauds, but as political tracts—which no one takes them to be—they are fine!

All this means—to put it bluntly—that much of modern social anthropology is liberal sexual politics masquerading as science. The continued cover-up of this scandal by so many anthropologists makes politicians like Richard Nixon look like Honest Abe. (Incidentally, for an even more devastating analysis of the relation between Margaret Mead's sexual agenda and her scientific pretentions—as well as those of Alfred Kinsey—I refer the reader to two outstanding articles by E. Michael Jones in *Fidelity* magazine.)

Later chapters of the book focus on Freud's influence, again distorted, on our child-rearing practices; and on his impact on America's prison reform movement: here Freud was used—misused—to remove the concept of responsibility from criminal behavior. Karl Menninger, a champion of Freudian thought (and author of the book *The Crime of Punishment*), declared, "I suspect that all the crimes committed by all the jailed criminals do not equal in total social damage that of the crimes committed against them."

Near the end, Torrey examines the scientific support for Freud's theories. He points out that research has reliably failed to substantiate Freudian concepts. Here, Torrey could have been much more

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thorough. He does not mention Adolf Grünbaum's powerful critique of psychoanalysis as being fundamentally unscientific, or point out that there is no evidence that sexual abstinence causes psychological harm. Nor does Torrey mention that many major analysts today see psychoanalysis as a hermeneutic theory, closely related to literary theory and to the humanities. The point here—and it could have received even more emphasis—is that the linking of Freud to science was done primarily for ideological reasons. In a last chapter, Torrey contrasts the common psychological interpretation of personality as due to early childhood experience with new genetic evidence. The author is making an important point: recent research demonstrates that genetic and biological factors are significant in forming our personality. By contrast, researchers have had a hard time showing effects of early experience on our later personality. Extreme childhood trauma does have some effects, but things like weaning, toilet-training, and the like seem to be essentially trivial.

The major weakness in Torrey's book is that he holds Freud responsible for how Americans misused him. In general this is not fair to Freud; there are enough reasons to criticize Freud without accusing him of sins he did not commit. As to why American intellectuals were so bent on the "triumph of the therapeutic" and why the country succumbed so thoroughly to "psychological" interpretations, these questions remain to be explained by a social analysis deeper than that provided by Torrey.

But whatever its weaknesses, this book constitutes another significant critique of Freud as a modernist idol. As we look back at the pantheon of such idols, we see that Marx has undergone a meltdown; Darwin, like Freud, is crumbling; even Nietzsche with his nihilism and Dewey with his progressive education—and both with their cult of individualism—are looking shaky. In the 1970s, a neoconservative was a liberal mugged by reality; in the 1980s, a liberal with a teenaged daughter. In the 1990s, a neoconservative may well be a liberal who learns that "social science" is neither.

A Contested Legacy

JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL CONVERSATION. EDITED BY ROBERT P. HUNT and KENNETH L. GRASSO. *Eerdmans. 298 pp. $21.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **James Finn**

TOWARD THE END of Vatican Council II (1962-1965), John Courtney Murray, S.J., in the company of other clerics, concelebrated mass with Pope Paul VI. Like most other Americans who were in St. Peter's at the time, I felt that it was a much-deserved and long-overdue public ecclesiastical acknowledgment of the achievement of America's leading Catholic theologian, who was also an exemplar of how to conduct civil public discourse. It was common knowledge that in the 1950s church authorities had suppressed articles written by Murray on various aspects of religious liberty and church-state relations, that he had been "disinvited" to opening sessions of the Council, and that only after Cardinal Spellman's intervention had he been invited as a *peritus*, still in time to make significant contributions to the "Declaration on Religious Freedom" (*Dignitate Humanae*), which Paul VI was to term "one of the major texts of the Council." His preeminence was now recognized and unassailable.

However, even during the few years left to him—he died in 1967—and certainly in the years immediately after his death, Murray's influence was waning. Even many admirers of the person and his work believed that he had worked in a worn-out mode of thought and discourse, classicist and static, and that it was time to press ahead, beyond the boundaries that had constrained him. In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in his work, a recognition that Murray was quite conscious of the difference and possible clash between classicism and historical consciousness, and that there are riches in the corpus of his work that have yet to be fully appropriated. This renewed interest derives at least partly from the perception that our society is now riven by disputes over issues that were precisely Murray's concern—religious liberty, the role of religion in a democracy, relations of church to state, the moral bases of American society. *John Courtney Murray and the American Civil Conversation* is a strong and welcome confirmation of this interest. Thirteen contributors, including the two editors, Robert P. Hunt and Kenneth L. Grasso, address different aspects of Murray's work, assess what he achieved—or failed to achieve—and speculate about how he would approach some of our present problems.

THE UNDERTAKING to which they bend their efforts is not an easy one. Not only are the issues profound, but Murray's thinking about them developed and changed over the years. After reading this book I concluded that were all the contributors locked in a room to discuss Murray's past and present contribution, it would be a far distant day before they would achieve the civil conversation denoted in the title of the book. For Murray himself noted that even real disagreement—something more than mere opposing opinions—is a real achievement and depends upon mutual understanding of the universe of moral discourse in which conversation takes place. And even before they could reach that stage these writers would have to clear up some differences about facts and definitions.

For example, William R. Luckey, who provides a specifically Catholic perspective, states that Murray

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was "the moving force behind, and the intellectual architect of, the document *Dignitate Humanae*"; but Francis Canavan, S.J., writes that Murray was not "the only or the principal person who influenced Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Freedom," and explains why Murray was less than satisfied with that document. Another example: In his warm assessment of Murray, Luckey writes that Murray was "a thoroughly orthodox Catholic—no liberal (*in any sense of the term*) and no indifferentist" (emphasis added). But others differ. Richard John Neuhaus, for one, says that "against the grain of his time, he remained, most determinedly, a liberal." Others as well refer to Murray's liberalism.

Some differences such as these could probably be settled with only slight difficulty. There are others, however, that are deeper and their ready resolution doubtful. In some of Murray's most important essays, there are frequent references to "consensus," "public philosophy," and "natural law," with less frequent comments about their relation to one another. For Murray consensus did not mean mere "majority opinion," although he was acutely aware that it was frequently used in that sense. But he insisted that it was the apt and historical word to designate what he intended. By the American consensus he meant the public philosophy of America. Some quotations from *We Hold These Truths* will help here.

> "I will use the terms pretty much synonymously, though there is a nuance of meaning. The term 'public philosophy' emphasizes an objectivity of content; the term 'consensus' emphasizes a subjectivity of persuasion."

> " 'We hold these truths . . . ' That is to say, we have a public philosophy; as a people we have come to a consensus. . . . [T]he affirmation of these truths pretends to and possesses a certain universal validity. Not only do we hold these truths; they are human truths of a sort that man as such is bound to hold."

> "I would maintain, for instance, that the public consensus of the West, and of the United States as an historic participant in the Western style of civilization, would remain the public consensus even if it were held, as perhaps it is held, only by a minority within the West. The validity of the consensus is radically independent of its possible status as either majority or minority opinion."

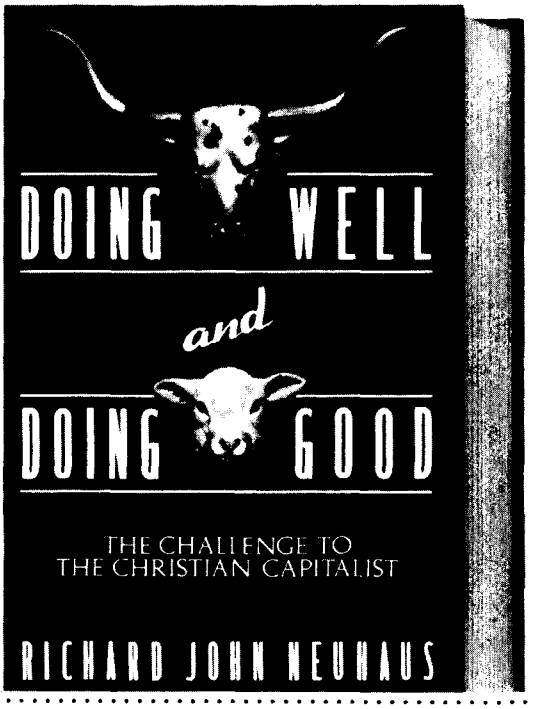
> "My proposition is that only the theory of natural law is able to give an account of the public moral experience that is the public consensus."

TO MANY contemporary ears such assertions will sound both unfamiliar and uncongenial. They run against the current of much of our public discourse, and they are not accepted by all the writers in this book. Yet Murray stated that the only presuppositions to the doctrine of natural law are threefold:

"One of the most profound social commentators of our time." —J. Peter Grace, Chairman and CEO, W.R. Grace & Company

"Further evidence that the moral curiosity of Richard John Neuhaus is one of the country's most important assets....It could not be more timely."
—WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.

"One of America's foremost churchmen and theologians explores the complex relationship between religion, a free economy, and a free society....Sweeping yet profound."
—WILLIAM E. SIMON



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that reality is intelligible; that humankind is intelligent; and that reality, grasped by the intelligence, imposes obligations on human actions or abstention from actions.

The relations Murray established among the key terms—consensus, public philosophy, and natural law—are complex and do not always seem to hold steady. Murray himself decried the attacks on the moral tradition that shaped the American consensus, deplored the decay of the public philosophy, and foresaw the possibility that "the many-storeyed mansion of democracy will be dismantled, levelled to the dimensions of a flat majoritarianism. . . ." Here he seemed to acknowledge that the consensus (public philosophy) could slip, erode, decay.

The decay of our public philosophy has, indeed, proceeded apace since Murray's death and there is open debate about whether we can or even should have one. It is at this more advanced stage that the present writers participate in the conversation. Several of them cope valiantly with the underlying philosophical and theological issues—Robert F. Cuervo, Kenneth L. Grasso, Peter Augustine Lawler, David T. Mason. Their arguments, going along different paths, sometimes cross at points of agreement, but they cannot be said to converge. They hold different opinions, for example, on whether, how, and to what extent the disintegration of natural law doctrine can be reversed and whether, therefore, a consensus (public philosophy) is a realistic possibility.

In his persuasive, thoughtful essay David Novak puts the question directly: "If teleological metaphysics and its natural theology can no longer cogently ground natural law by connecting it to God,"—as he has just argued—"what can reestablish that grounding connect?" He asserts that Murray's "metaphysically constituted theology of Aristotelian Thomism" cannot do the trick since it is based on a correspondence theory of truth that is no longer accepted. All is not lost, however, in Novak's approach. Brutally truncated, his argument is that since covenantal communities of faith accept the revealed word of God as normative, a correspondence theory of truth still holds within them, making it possible to develop within each an accepted understanding of natural law. Discourse can then take place between these religious communities before they attempt to engage, on these terms, the secular world.

Without engaging as directly with these philosophical and theological questions, other writers deal with questions that are equally pressing, and sometimes politically divisive. Canavan's lucid explanation of Murray's dissatisfaction with *Dignitate Humanae* leads to his conclusion: "Murray's doctrine on religious freedom is thus based not on the subjective rights of conscience but the objective natural goals of civil society. From the latter a theory of constitutional government can be inferred." And later, "Murray clearly would agree that a constitutionalism based solely or primarily on the rights of the individual is a weak one and leads eventually to a monistic society. He might also agree today that is the direction in which our constitutionalism is moving." If this movement continues, if increasing pluralism and a continually decaying consensus constitute our future, who can predict the outcome? The American experiment that has been ours, in which political freedom and religious liberty have flourished, may prove, Canavan chillingly concludes, "to have been a happy moment in history."

IN AN EQUALLY lucid essay dealing with religious liberty, Gerard V. Bradley takes issue with Murray's well-known description of the religion clauses of the First Amendment as "Articles of Peace" rather than "Articles of Faith." In Murray's analysis, the clauses depend on no prior religious suppositions, and are void of religious content. They are law, not dogma, and require not religious assent but civil obedience. This sets them apart from "Articles of Faith" invested with sectarian tenets regarding such profound religious matters as truth, human freedom, faith, conscience. Those who would so read them are mistaken and misguided.

This distinction has served a historically useful purpose but, Bradley argues, it now favors those who would invest the clauses with particular meaning and disarms those who oppose this reading. The distinction has become a useful tool for those who would privatize religion and evacuate it from the public arena. There is general agreement that over at least the last four decades Supreme Court decisions on matters of religion and the state have been marked by sharp differences and vast confusion. One Supreme Court justice has said that Court decisions on key Establishment Clause issues are decided on "our own prepossession," and another that the Court simply decides what is the best national policy. And where do these justices get their presuppositions by which they determine the "best" national policy? Today, according to Bradley, from some variant of liberal individualism, which is now in the cultural mainstream. Bradley argues persuasively that we should acknowledge that the religion clauses grew out of a Christian worldview. Although they guarantee religious freedom for all, they are indeed a Christian artifact. Building on that historical truth, we should return to the "originating context" of the First Amendment and rescue these clauses from the "judicialization" of the church-state issues.

In an interesting performance in which he seems eager to embrace Murray in the generality and dispute him in the particulars, John C. Cort argues that the realist Murray turned "a preferential option for the poor into a preferential option for a free economy," and that he did so on the basis of a utopian ideal. He then trains his guns on other targets, notably Michael Novak, who he thinks have misun-

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derstood economic rights.

SURMISING, no doubt correctly, that Murray would be intrigued by many of the challenges that Americans, religious and nonreligious, face today, Mary C. Segers attempts to assay what his position on the legalities of abortion might be today. She states that by insisting on the distinction between sin and crime—not all sins are or should be criminalized—Murray thereby reserved to the private citizen whether, for example, birth control is moral or not. With that as a keystone, she argues to the following conclusion: "By all of Murray's criteria, abortion may more properly be categorized as an issue of private morality. Since this is the case, public policy may relegate abortion to the private sphere of moral decision making by individual women who best know their own circumstances and who are directly affected by involuntary pregnancy."

The suspicion that other contributors to this volume would not follow Ms. Segers down this path is immediately confirmed by Robert P. Hunt's "Moral Orthodoxy and the Procedural Republic." In the course of his argument against the merely procedural republic, Hunt says that "those who would appropriate Murray as a principled or practical defender of the 'neutral' state fail to consider seriously Murray's commitment to the American polity as an inevitably moral enterprise. This failure is grounded in a desire, on the appropriator's part, to collapse moral issues into the private realm of the autonomous selfhood—as evidenced by the 'pro-choice' argument in the contemporary abortion debate in America."

The volume concludes with George Weigel's resounding affirmation of Murray's continuing value as a resource in our contemporary *Kulturkampf*. He outlines usefully and succinctly the issues we must address if we wish to participate, in Murray's spirit, in our "American civil conversation." As the preceding essays make almost cruelly clear, that task will not be easy. But as Murray once wrote, in a different context, "I do not say that it is possible, I only say that it is necessary." If we are to have a religiously informed public philosophy, it is necessary that we engage in the civil conversation that is still fostered by a few forums that are congenial to such discourse.

Some minor observations: In a collection that covers so much ground, I missed an analysis of John F. Kennedy's pre-election Houston speech to Protestant ministers. Not only did Murray contribute to that speech, but as a milestone in matters of individual conscience and civil obligation it remains a contentious document today. I also missed a bibliography, even a selected one, of Murray's writings. It would probably have prevented one of the writers from referring to Murray's sixty-nine articles as if that were his total output. Maybe more important is the absence of an index, which would have been most useful. Finally, at least once Paul Blanshard's name is given its frequent misspelling.

Niebuhr the Teacher

PROFESSOR REINHOLD NIEBUHR: A MENTOR TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By RONALD H. STONE. *Westminster/John Knox Press. 284 pp. $21.99 paper.*

NIEBUHR AND HIS AGE: REINHOLD NIEBUHR'S PROPHETIC ROLE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By CHARLES C. BROWN. *Trinity Press International. $34.95.*

Reviewed by **Matthew Berke**

OF BOOKS AND DISSERTATIONS about Reinhold Niebuhr, it seems, there is no end. Having committed one such dissertation myself a few years ago, I am in no position to complain. Of course the real truth is that dedicated Niebuhrians leap at any chance to return to the moral and intellectual universe of this great teacher, who, at midcentury, was America's leading public theologian and political theorist. Though often forgotten in recent years, Niebuhr (1892-1971) was recognized by *Life* magazine (special issue, Fall 1990) as one of "The 100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century."

Professor Reinhold Niebuhr by Ronald Stone is an earnest and competent review of the man's life and thought. Stone, Professor of Social Ethics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Niebuhr's last graduate assistant, is intimately familiar with the Niebuhrian corpus and is able, predictably, to offer some helpful observations and formulations without taxing the uninitiated reader with too much theological baggage.

The ostensible purpose for this new intellectual biography is to reveal the primacy of Niebuhr's role as an educator; hence the title's emphasis on *Professor* Reinhold Niebuhr (he taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York City from 1928 to 1960). The preface begins with this intriguing argument:

> Previous studies, including my own, have failed to locate Niebuhr in the context of his vocation. He was not primarily a pastor or a preacher. He was not primarily an advisor to public figures. He was not primarily an author of immense productivity. He was first and foremost a professor of Protestant social ethics in the context of Protestant theological education. . . . Reinhold Niebuhr was the most brilliant professor I ever met. I hope this book, whatever its limitations, shows him as that professor.

Had *Professor Reinhold Niebuhr*

MATTHEW BERKE *is Managing Editor of* FIRST THINGS. *His article "The Disputed Legacy of Reinhold Niebuhr" appeared in the November 1992 issue.*

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stuck to the intention expressed in its title and preface, it might have been a new and refreshing contribution to the voluminous secondary literature on the author's famous mentor. Unfortunately the main text contains scarcely enough classroom material to fill an article—and much of that seems forced. There is an extended description of Niebuhr's class lectures; but the content so closely parallels Niebuhr's writings that the reader might as well turn to the books and articles themselves, or, for that matter, to some of the more lively secondary sources and commentaries that are available. The book presents recollections by former students, but they are both few and uninspired, which seems curious given the awe, reverence, and affection that so many students had for their famous professor. Thus, despite the rubric of studying Niebuhr as teacher, what Stone in fact presents is a general review of Niebuhr's life and thought that is largely a rehearsal of familiar themes and insights.

Stone finds several occasions to snipe at Richard Wightman Fox, whose *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (1985) scandalized Niebuhr's family and friends—and, among others, this reviewer as well. Fox used dubious psychologizing to imply that Niebuhr was a compulsive and ambitious man who often neglected family and personal relations, and who may have cut his politics to intellectual fashion. Fox also criticized Niebuhr for the slapdash character of some of his books. But errors in fact and judgment notwithstanding, Fox's book does display considerable literary flair, which at points soars in tribute to its subject. In a biographical essay published one year before his book-length treatment ("Who Can But Prophesy? The Life of Reinhold Niebuhr," in Charles W. Kegley, ed., *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought*, [1984]), Fox painted, in a few short paragraphs, a vivid, unforgettable portrait of Niebuhr the teacher:

> Niebuhr's unusual rapport with the young provides one important clue to his character. In his dealings with other people, whether great or ordinary, mature or fledgling, he was a pure democrat, incapable of condescension. The adulation of others genuinely embarrassed him. Those he found it hardest to stomach were the ones who put him on a pedestal. With students, especially those with earnest, pointed questions, he found himself thoroughly at home. Like him, they were oblivious to social form, and not given to polite acquiescence. Like him, they were uncynical, willing to believe that commitment mattered, eager to put their abundant energy to work.
>
> That single word—energy—takes us closer than any other to an understanding of Niebuhr the person. The testimony of those who knew him is unanimous. None ever knew another remotely like him. Other vigorous, intense, charismatic preachers, political organizers, religious thinkers, or social critics crossed their paths, but "Reinie"—they shake their heads and smile—was different. It was not just that he managed to play all four of those roles instead of one or two of them. It was his utterly unique form of energy. He did not just radiate energy, like some tranquil sun; he pumped it out like a steaming, churning power plant. He was electric, incandescent, possessed. He was in perpetual motion, unable to rest.
>
> Students in his office at Union Theological Seminary sat before a caged animal who paced with long strides through clouds of cigarette smoke from one corner to the other. He had to be up and about. Forty or more weekends a year, for more than a quarter-century, he bolted from one state to another, preaching at colleges, addressing student conferences, conferring at political meetings. His packed suitcase sometimes sat poised beside him in the classroom. A delayed train or airplane drove him to distraction. He constantly checked his watch. There might not be enough time.

There is, alas, more life, drama, and passion compressed in these three paragraphs than in all of Ronald Stone's rather bland attempts at filial devotion.

CHARLES C. BROWN'S *Niebuhr and His Age* traces the development of Niebuhr's thought through its various stages—naive liberal, disillusioned liberal, quasi-Marxist radical, Christian realist—and sets this evolution within the context of historical and political events. Though this is hardly a new approach, Brown does it very well. The author is thoroughly steeped both in the relevant texts and in the currents of recent history that formed and perpetually challenged Niebuhr's views. Brown writes authoritatively, with no particular ax to grind, in describing a variety of historical periods and crises. His prose style is economical, lucid, and quietly elegant, and he presents a seamless interweaving of world events with Niebuhr's responses.

The book might be faulted for not adequately bringing Niebuhr up to date; given that Niebuhr was a thinker who always put an intellectual premium on "relevance" (in the best sense of the term), the contemporary significance of his work needs more than the scant attention it receives in Brown's closing chapter on "The Niebuhrian Legacy." It is not clear whether the author had to hurry his conclusions to meet a publisher's deadline or whether he got a case of last-minute mugwumpery. There are some mild affirmations—and warnings—to conservatives and liberals alike, but they are not

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especially helpful in figuring out how the Niebuhrian worldview might be applied to recent and current issues. Granted, Niebuhr, were he alive today, would probably tolerate a more active federal government than do some neoconservatives who now claim his legacy; but the implication made here, that he would favor greater funding to low-rent public housing—one of the most egregious failures of the liberal welfare state—flies in the face of historical experience.

Moreover, bringing the legacy up to date would have required a more vigorous defense of Niebuhr against his critics, who in these times of "political correctness" are many, as the author himself recognizes. In seminaries and religious studies departments across the country, most faculty and students feel that religious ethics has graduated from Niebuhr's Christian realism to the more liberating theologies derived from Marxism, nationalistic third-world revolutionism, and feminism. Where Niebuhr was once regarded as the preeminent Christian ethicist, he is now often seen as a reactionary or regressive force, to be read primarily as a negative example. Some of Niebuhr's former colleagues and students, having traded in their Christian realism for trendier nouveau theologies, try to present their old friend in a way that will be palatable to the leftish sensibilities of today; but their efforts are inevitably overwhelmed by anti-Niebuhrian liberationists.

THERE IS, in short, too much caution where bold defense of the Niebuhrian worldview might have been employed—especially against feminist deconstruction. Brown observes, for instance, that even Niebuhr's "friendliest critics agree [that he] emphasized sin as pride too much, and sin as sloth or apathy too little, as causes of social evil. His analysis of human nature, it is now widely agreed, does not adequately describe some aspects of women's experience. . . ." Well, maybe. But then perhaps Niebuhr was correct—at least insofar as he was discussing politics—to stress pride rather than sloth as the central and most lethal sin. And as anyone who has been active in practical politics will attest, this judgment applies to women (especially "progressive" and feminist women) no less than to men.

It might also be asked whether Niebuhr's feminist critics practice a kind of willful misreading of his writings, all the better to make him a convenient foil. Niebuhr, after all, was always attentive to Nietzsche's critique of the "slave morality," that corrupting ethos by which the powerless manipulate the bad conscience of their erstwhile oppressors, not merely in order to attain justice but also to enact their own will-to-power. Since this device is a staple of feminist polemics, such writers understandably deplore Niebuhr's emphasis on the sin of egotistical self-assertion, particularly as it is rationalized and concealed by ideology.

Niebuhr's endorsement of a general expansion of opportunities for women, including their ordination, might have earned him the feminist label in an earlier, more innocent time. That sort of feminism—"feminism as fairness"—has been superseded by a ruthless "feminism as ideology," which cannot but see Reinhold Niebuhr as enemy. Did he not have the audacity to contradict feminist orthodoxy by insisting that men and women are different in ways that need to be recognized by custom and law? But perhaps no feature of Niebuhr's thought is more immediately seized upon by hostile feminist critics than his frequent use of the generic "man" for person or human being. On this point even Charles Brown insists that "radical feminists go too far in objecting to his use of language, standard in earlier ages, that does not meet a subsequent standard of gender inclusiveness."

Ronald Stone, in his book, refers to Niebuhr as "the most brilliant professor I ever met." Charles Brown, and others who have come to know Niebuhr through his books and articles, can at least know that he was also a brilliant professor to the nation, whose "writings on various problems of American society . . . remain relevant long after the occasions of their mid-twentieth-century publication." If Niebuhrian realism does not offer "a detailed agenda for public policy," it does provide "certain guiding axioms [that are] still valid" because they are derived from timeless religious truths.

BRIEFLY NOTED

THE BOOK OF LEGENDS: SEFER HA-AGGADAH. LEGENDS FROM THE TALMUD AND MIDRASH. Edited by HAYIM NAHMAN BIALIK and YEHOSHUA HANA RAVNITZKY. *Schocken. 897 pp. $75.*

Anthologies are frequently described as "treasure troves" of this or that. But *The Book of Legends* really is a treasure trove of Jewish wisdom and teaching. The material of this massive volume is the *aggadah*—the stories, parables, and reflections of the Talmud and Midrash (that in contrast to the *halakhah*, or legal, ritual, and ethical rulings). Because *aggadic* writings were interspersed throughout many books, they remained inaccessible as an identifiable body of literature until Bialik and Ravnitzky first published a Hebrew compendium of *aggadah* in Odessa (1908-11), organizing diverse adages, legends,

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and speculations according to theme: "Man and His Needs," "Good and Evil," "Exile," "Redemption and the Days of the Messiah," etc. Now, finally, their *Sefer Ha-Aggadah* is available in an English translation by the late William G. Braude. The first two entries are explanations of, and invitations to, the book as a whole: "If you wish to know Him by whose word the world came into being, study *Aggadah*; you will thereby come to know the Holy One, blessed be He, and hold fast to His ways." And: "Do not let the parable appear of little worth to you. Through a parable, a man can fathom words of Torah. Consider the king who has lost a gold coin or a precious pearl in his house. May he not find it by the light of a wick worth no more than an issar [a penny]? Likewise, do not let the parable appear of little worth to you. By its light, a man may fathom words of Torah."

THE BROKEN STAFF: JUDAISM THROUGH CHRISTIAN EYES. By FRANK E. MANUEL. *Harvard University Press. 363 pp. $34.95.*

A secular Jewish scholar describes the attempts of Christian scholars since the Middle Ages to recover the Jewish sources of their own faith. The tradition of Christian Hebraism began as an attempt to refute the Jews, to root out blasphemy, and, to a very limited extent, to clarify technical points of scriptural interpretation. The author shows that Christian Hebraism often completely misunderstood Judaism—the perennial misrepresentation of Judaism as a religion of arid legalism being a case in point. But centuries of intensive study also revealed similiarities and affinities between the faiths, such that learned Christians eventually recognized an "umbilical cord that bound Christianity to Judaism." In the field of Jewish-Christian relations, which seems to produce new books by the day, this volume stands out as a masterpiece of compression that brilliantly summarizes a vast literature, written in many languages and disciplines over many centuries. The author's prose is not only readable but often quite lively.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT. By THOMAS C. ODEN. *HarperCollins. 548 pp. $30.*

A THEOLOGY OF WORD AND SPIRIT. By DONALD G. BLOESCH. *InterVarsity Press. 335 pp. $19.99.*

Evangelical Protestantism is about more than church growth, traditional morality, and political activism. These two volumes testify to an impressive and growing theological maturity among evangelicals. Oden and Bloesch represent theological "growth," but not in the usual sense of accommodating to a dispirited liberalism. They breathe new life into a history of evangelical scholarship that, while sometimes close to it, has never been quite dead. Although different in many ways, they are alike in their determination to advance a vibrant orthodoxy that is grounded in Scripture, shaped by the Great Tradition of Christian history, and faithful to what they believe to be the Reformation corrective. Oden's is the third and final volume in his systematic theology, while the Bloesch volume is the first of a promised seven. Oden, a Methodist at Drew University, has repeatedly declared that he wants to be paid the compliment that he has said nothing new. His is an exercise in unabashed repristination or *ressourcement*, reintroducing Protestants (or introducing them for the first time) to the richness of centuries of Christian intellectual achievement. *Life in the Spirit* (like the first two volumes, *The Living God* and *The Word of Life*) is especially strong in presenting the teachings of the early church fathers and catholic councils. Theology must first gets its intellectual and historical bearings, Oden insists, before it can have anything pertinent to say to contemporary questions. He further insists, and effectively demonstrates, that most of what we take to be contemporary questions are, in fact, quite ancient. Bloesch, of Dubuque Theological Seminary, aims at a more "constructive" engagement with the modern theological situation dating from Schleiermacher and reaching its peak, or at least one of its peaks, in Karl Barth. He moves with erudite ease from Pannenberg to Tillich to Tracy to Ellul to Dulles. If successor volumes fulfill the promise, Bloesch's project will be an admirable introduction to the Christian theological situation at the edge of the Third Millennium. Both Oden and Bloesch evidence a firm sense of the importance of tradition and of the ecclesial embeddedness of theology, giving their work a high potential for advancing ecumenical understandings, especially with Roman Catholics and Orthodox.

PASSION FOR JUSTICE. By HARLAN BECKLEY. *Westminster/John Knox Press. 391 pp. $27.*

An historical study aimed at "retrieving the legacies" of Walter Rauschenbusch, John A. Ryan, and Reinhold Niebuhr. The treatment of Ryan ("Father New Deal"), who laid foundations for current Catholic social thought, is welcome, since he is unfamiliar to most Catholics and almost all Protestants. The comparative approach seems contrived and uneven, however; no doubt because Niebuhr is, as a religious thinker, head and shoulders above the other two.

FORGIVENESS. By JORAM GRAF HABER. *Rowman & Littlefield. 146 pp. $42.50.*

An exercise in moral philosophy that, although learned and lucid, comes to the unconvincing conclusion that the only factor that can justify forgiveness is the repentance of the wrongdoer. The world is untrusting, bitter, and calculating enough without this argument. (The price notwithstanding, the book appears to be printed on quite ordinary paper.)

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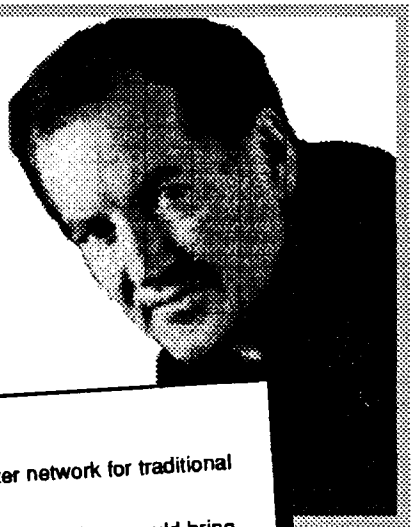
This is what

George Gilder

Conservative author of the best selling book *"Wealth And Poverty"* has to say about the

Rose Hill Forum



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THE VISIONS OF THE CHILDREN. By JANICE T. CONNELL. *St. Martin's. 269 pp. $19.95.*

Among the many reported apparitions of the Virgin Mary in recent years, none have received so much attention as those at Medjugorje in now-ravaged Yugoslavia. A relatively sober but emphatically positive account of what has occasioned all the excitement.

FACES IN THE CLOUDS: A NEW THEORY OF RELIGION. By STEWART ELLIOTT GUTHRIE. *Oxford University Press. 336 pp. $25.*

An anthropologist at Fordham University, of all places, reinvents Feuerbach. In tedious detail he explains that religion is, don't you see, but a projection of our human relationships. Yes, yes, Dr. Guthrie, and now moving on to theories of the twentieth century . . .

BEYOND LIBERATION THEOLOGY. By HUMBERTO BELLI and RONALD NASH. *Baker. 206 pp. $12.95 paper.*

A forcefully argued demonstration that some evangelical Protestants surpass their Catholic counterparts in understanding the significance of Catholic social teaching. The book is truly beyond, and not merely against, liberation theologies that have obscured the Christian gospel and promoted economic and political directions that are very bad for the poor. Belli is minister of education in Nicaragua and Nash is professor of theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida.

RELIGION AND SEXUALITY IN AMERICAN LITERATURE. By ANN-JANINE MOREY. *Cambridge University Press. 276 pp. $44.95.*

One is reminded how very much American literature, from Hawthorne to Updike, is preoccupied with exploring the connections between religious and sexual experience. Morey demonstrates her familiarity with all the correct methodologies, from deconstructionism to feminist postmodernism, but her aim is to illumine the commonalities between spirit and body, men and women. She succeeds, gracefully.

EUTHANASIA IS NOT THE ANSWER. By DAVID CUNDIFF *Humana Press. 190 pp. $17.95.*

A forceful, readable argument for hospices as the better answer to anxieties about painful and prolonged dying, written by a medical doctor who has studied hospice systems in the U.S. and Europe.

"CHURCH AND AGE UNITE!": THE MODERNIST IMPULSE IN AMERICAN CATHOLICISM. By R. SCOTT APPLEBY. *University of Notre Dame Press. 296 pp. $29.95.*

A history of the modernist and Americanist "heresies" up to 1910. The author's suggestion that today's testings of Rome on the limits of dissent is a reprise of those earlier conflicts is less plausible than his telling of what happened back then.

SACRIFICE AND DELIGHT: SPIRITUALITY FOR MINISTRY. By ALAN JONES. *HarperCollins. 208 pp. $19.*

How dismal is most of what passes for "spiritual" writing in these last days. How delightful to discover the dean of Grace Cathedral (Episcopal), San Francisco, reflecting on ministry that is his, and ours. No alert reader will think time taken for this book is a sacrifice.

ABORTION RITES: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF ABORTION IN AMERICA. By MARVIN OLASKY. *Crossway. 317 pp. $25.*

Earlier comment on this important book appeared in The Public Square (October 1992). Now that the way toward establishing laws protective of the unborn seems to be blocked for the foreseeable future, Olasky's study—emphasizing the importance of social censure against abortion while providing help for women with crisis pregnancies—becomes even more pertinent. The nineteenth-century history of abortion in America, he convincingly contends, should be remembered in order to be repeated.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

The Ruling "We" of the American Jewish Congress

Some writers on the First Amendment, including this editor, have long made the argument that there is but one religion clause. The purpose of the clause is to protect the "free exercise" of religion, and the "no establishment" provision is in the service of that purpose (see "A New Order of Religious Freedom," FT, February 1992). This approach is in sharp contrast to those who would pit the "two clauses" against one another. For example, Burt Neuborne, Professor of Law at New York University. Writing in *Congress Monthly*, the magazine of the American Jewish Congress, Neuborne exemplifies an extreme but very influential reading of the First Amendment on religion.

Neuborne notes that free exercise requires us to defend religious behavior even when we strongly disagree with it. "Witness the fact that we will correctly defend someone's religious right not to be vaccinated against a contagious disease." At the same time, Neuborne writes, "the Establishment clause requires us to be suspicious of religion, even hostile to it. . . . One clause says that religion is something to be cherished, while the other says that religion is something to be feared." Neuborne approvingly describes this as the genius of "a schizophrenic Constitution—one that pulls us in different directions, one that pulls in favor of religion in its Free Exercise clause and against religion in its Establishment clause."

The reason why "no establishment" is intended to inculcate fear and hostility toward religion, says Neuborne, is that religion, unlike politics, is not volitional. In addition, "What is both sublime and terrifying about religion is that it is essentially non-rational behavior. . . . You don't carry on a reasoned dialogue about your relationship with your God. Religion is there and you live it." And so it was that "the Founders inserted the Free Exercise clause, designed to shelter individuals who were driven to act by a force more powerful than law." Free exercise, according to Neuborne, "requires us to carve out a special niche of toleration" for such nonrational behavior. Religion is not only nonrational, but too many of its proponents are irrational. "Try," Neuborne writes, "having a reasoned discussion with Pat Buchanan or Pat Robertson."

A "prophylactic wall between church and state" is required to protect the public square from religion. Neuborne concludes: "We have not been ashamed to say that we cherish religion and will protect its private exercise to the very limit of reason—and perhaps a little beyond. Conversely, we have not been afraid to acknowledge that we fear public religion and that we are committed to preventing it from getting a toehold in the country's government."

Although others do not put it in such flat-footed language—they would not, for instance, come right out and say that "no establishment" requires hostility to religion—the views of Professor Neuborne are widely shared. They underlie and are sometimes explicitly stated in numerous court decisions. The problem with the Neuborne interpretation is that it flies in the face of the plain reading of the religion clause of the First Amendment. And it flies in the face of what we know to be the intention of the Founders (see, for example, William Lee Miller, *The First Liberty*, or John Noonan, *The Believer and the Powers That Are*). Neuborne's is truly a new born interpretation that has a provenance of no more than fifty years, its godfather being the formidable and self-described extreme separationist, Leo Pfeffer of the American Jewish Congress.

This extreme interpretation is certainly not held by all Jews nor by all Jewish organizations. In fact, one of the very encouraging developments of recent years is the growing skepticism of thoughtful Jews toward "strict separationism."

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(The Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. has just published a book-length collection of "revisionist" Jewish reflections on religion and public life: *American Jews and the Separationist Faith*, edited by David G. Dalin.) Nonetheless, the Pfefferian reading of the First Amendment, as represented by Neuborne and the Congress, is still the dominant view among American Jews, and in many of our courts.

Neuborne's contorted interpretation of the First Amendment is matched by his curious view that religion is nonrational. Admittedly, Neuborne's view is hardly novel, but it is sharply contested by innumerable Christians and Jews who understand the religious life indeed to be the carrying on of a "reasoned dialogue" with God—although they might not choose that precise language. Ironically, Neuborne's claim is that the Constitution "establishes" a brand of religion—espoused in both existentialist and traditionalist versions—that asserts that faith is a matter of blind and unreasoned submission to authority. That is not the religion of most Christians and most Jews. Further, Neuborne would "establish" a religion that is entirely individual and private, that is hermetically sealed off from the public sphere. That is certainly not the religion of Christians, Jews, and Muslims whose faith is emphatically communal and public in character.

The Pfefferian inversion of the religion clause that continues to be promoted by the American Jewish Congress subordinates "free exercise" (the end) to "no establishment" (a means to that end). It does so by establishing a religion that is in conflict with the religion espoused by the great majority of Americans, and by propounding a profoundly anti-democratic interpretation of our constitutional order. The Constitution requires, says Neuborne, "that we fear public religion and that we are committed to preventing it from getting a toehold in the country's government." This is inescapably an argument against democratic governance. If, as we know to be the case, most Americans claim to derive their moral discernments from religion—however confusedly they may do so—to exclude religion from the ordering of our public life is to exclude the discernments, judgments, and aspirations of the sovereign people from whom democracy derives its moral legitimacy.

Then there is the offputting snobbery in Neuborne's argument. "Try having a reasoned discussion with Pat Buchanan or Pat Robertson," he says. To which one might counter, "Try having a reasoned discussion with Burt Neuborne about, for instance, the nature of religion and public life." (The present writer is pleased to report that, in fact, he has had reasoned discussions with all three of the gentlemen in question.) Of those whom he calls "the religiously driven" Neuborne writes, "As individuals, we cherish and tolerate them; as political actors, we fear and control them." Really now. Who belongs to this "we" that presumes to "control" millions of Americans who, by Neuborne's definition, are "religiously driven"? Thoughtful Americans of all political and religious persuasions are fully justified in dismissing with scorn, and not a little resentment, the legally contorted and brazenly elitist presumption of Professor Neuborne and the American Jewish Congress.

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MURDEROUS UTOPIANS

In the 1970s all the beautiful people in Philadelphia took up Ira Einhorn, a guru of the children of the Age of Aquarius. "Philadelphia's favorite hippie son," he was called. The master of consciousness raising was for a time on the payroll of Episcopal Bishop Robert De Witt. Einhorn took up, in turn, Holly Maddux and killed her. In 1979 her bludgeoned body was found in a steamer trunk where it had been hidden for eighteen months. It was found just after Einhorn had been appointed a fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Michael André Bernstein reflects on these sordid events in *The American Scholar*. He had known Maddux as a student. He had known, and he knows, the perverse ways of mind, now so prominent in the academy, that turn Einhorns and others of the Charles Manson ilk into cultural celebrities. Bernstein writes: "Certainly flaunting one's contempt for the constraints of normative, prosaic life, and finding a kind of liberation in the kinship between oneself and a mythologized image of the underground and the outlaw was hardly a novel gambit. Its conventions have been endlessly repeated as part of the rhetoric by which each generation stakes its claim to a radically fresh perception. The nineteenth century in particular bequeathed to us a legend whose governing maxim was crystallized in Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus as: 'the artist is the brother of the criminal and the madman.' The unhappy corollary to this legacy, its 'underground' recasting as it were, became authoritative almost as quickly and with perhaps even more effectiveness: if the artist is akin to the criminal and the madman, then they, in turn, are themselves also artists. It is this paradigm within whose terms much of the modern imagination continues to be inscribed. Only it

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remains easier to commit a crime than a masterpiece, and so if the one proves unattainable the other is surely within the reach of the sufficiently hardened will."

The vicious sentiment is that of *ressentiment*, and its viciousness has only been magnified since envy was first termed one of the deadly sins. "Our recent culture continually trains us to develop an identificatory sympathy with whatever voice elects itself as the spokesman of a rebellion against 'bourgeois oppression.' Claiming to represent a constituency of the marginal and victimized is as canny a career move as any available in intellectual life today, and one of the mandatory gestures of that claim is an increasingly shrill dismissal of anti-apocalyptic, prudential modes of reasoning. This is a more paradoxical development than it may at first appear, if only because history would suggest that prosaic rationalism has hardly been the dominant motive in human affairs. Indeed, given the notable success, at both the political and the ideological levels, of the extremist and utopian strains in our thinking, it is the champions of normative quotidian rationality, not their polemical antagonists, who ought to exhibit the *ressentiment* characteristic of impotent failure."

The growing coerciveness of political correctness on the campus is not unrelated to the utopian impulse. Bernstein favors a somewhat revisionist view on where the new totalitarians are coming from. "Yet it is not really the case that the attempted imposition of an authoritarian and moralistic left-wing policy is owing to the seizure of power by a group of 'tenured radicals' carrying out a long-planned scheme, like subversive 'moles' infiltrating the British Secret Service in a Le Carré novel. This image, suggested in such books as Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*, seems to me to err by taking the self-description of the left-wing professoriate more seriously than it deserves. On the contrary, as more skeptical observers such as Camille Paglia have also begun to remark, the majority of today's vocal enforcers of political correctness were entirely conventional, indeed exemplarily docile graduate students and assistant professors during the sixties and seventies, too anxious for professional advancement to risk the slightest gesture of resistance. But the lure of the counterculture, which they rejected while students, exerted an appeal all the more powerful for having been set aside for so long, only for it to emerge with all the accumulated frustration of the intervening years once tenure guaranteed that there was no more risk involved. The problem is not tenured 'radicals,' it is tenured ex-nerds belatedly struggling to appropriate the glamour of the heroic rebels whose allure they were too cautious to heed at its moment of maximum appeal two decades earlier—a repetition, if you will, of the Philadelphia business community's enthrallment with Ira Einhorn, but if anything still more bizarre, because so out-of-phase with historical forces everywhere else outside academic life."

According to Bernstein, most of us are terribly confused about the meaning of repression and liberation in this society. "Perhaps the sharpest way to formulate my own position is to insist that, in our culture, it is neither sexuality nor the darkest urgings to violence and domination that are repressed. Exactly these issues constitute an enormous, if not actually the major, portion of our cultural conversation about the human psyche. What *is* repressed, though, is the force of the prosaic, the counter-authenticity of the texture and rhythm of our daily routines and decisions, the myriad of minute and careful adjustments that we are ready to offer in the interest of a habitable social world." Those who would resist utopian radicalisms must be prepared to be condemned as regressive and unfeeling. In a manner that is marvelous to behold, subscribing to the politics of victimization and resentment has become a prerequisite for being a nice person. The explanation, Bernstein suggests, is in the very nature of *ressentiment*. "*Ressentiment* combines anger, envy, and pride, the three most destructive of the still entirely pertinent medieval catalogue of sins, but it is the peculiarly modern hypocrisy to cloak such impulses in the language of social compassion." Bernstein says that he does not want to engage in "sixties bashing," and he really should not be accused of that. As he makes evident enough, the sixties are now—at least in the stiflingly precious world of the American academy.

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CAPITALISTS WITH A BAD CONSCIENCE

Stephen Hart, a freelance sociologist, has done some extensive interviewing and offers the results in *What Does the Lord Require? How Americans Think About Economic Justice* (Oxford). Hart does not attempt to disguise his bias:

"My hope is that in coming years Christians and others who share egalitarian, communal, and democratic visions will join to support and assist in the creation of a better society and world: one where our capacities for love, community, creativity, self-determination, and participation in

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decision-making are nurtured; where human needs and relationships take priority over profits, market forces, and technology. People sharing these hopes will have varying views as to how they might become incarnate. In my view a quite radical—in some sense socialist—transformation of our economy will be required, along with noneconomic changes in our lives and communities."

In 1992, after every socialism that has ever been tried has been decisively discredited, Hart's wistful longings for the old order might seem absurdly obtuse, but he is not without reason in drawing comfort from the conversations he reports in his book. He observes that Christians of many varieties tend to be much more liberal (meaning egalitarian or "socialist") when they talk about economics in religious rather than secular terms. In his everyday participation in a relatively free market economy, a Christian may think he knows quite a lot about economics. But he is, more often than not, a capitalist with a bad conscience. Asked to view economics from "the biblical perspective," he goes on the moral defensive. There is no denying that the Bible seems to be downright obsessive about the sins of the rich against the poor. There is, for instance, that awkward business about the camel and the eye of the needle.

Of course the Bible was written in a traditional and premodern social situation in which economics was almost entirely a zero-sum proposition. The rich were, generally speaking, rich at the expense of the poor being poor. That, as Mr. Hart demonstrates, is what most American Christians take to be "the biblical perspective." In our day, there are sophisticated moral arguments for the market economy, such as Pope John Paul II's 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*. And of course the discussion of the connections between Christianity and capitalism go back farther, as witness the immense literature generated by Max Weber's thesis about capitalism and the Protestant ethic. But Hart is surely right in suggesting that such analyses have left most American Christians quite untouched. Latter-day socialists are consoled by the thought that even conservative evangelicals and Catholics resonate to the pronouncements of liberal church bureaucracies that pose as prophets against profits.

There is nothing especially new in *What Does the Lord Require?* But it does usefully highlight the enormous difficulties faced by those who would move Christians who are social and moral conservatives toward a wholehearted embrace of economic freedom. This writer is something of an expert on the subject. For example, in a recent radio interview on his book *Doing Well and Doing Good: The Challenge to the Christian Capitalist*, the host began with this: "You write in favor of the free market. How can you morally justify greed, selfishness, and the exploitation of the poor by the rich?" At first we thought she was just being provocative, but it turned out that she appeared to be genuinely puzzled. Stephen Hart's interviews help us understand why we should not be puzzled by her puzzlement. A good many American Christians, perhaps most of them, are Sunday socialists. They are not likely to accommodate Mr. Hart and others who yearn for the socialist version of "a better society and world" by applying their Sunday bad conscience to their weekday business. But it is at least arguable that their Sunday socialism prevents them from being more reflective and responsible capitalists.

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GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN INNOCENT

More than a year after the Clarence Thomas hearings, the polls have significantly changed. Now most Americans say that they think Anita Hill was telling the truth. This despite the fact that, in the intervening period, the only new information on the affair was a longish article in *The American Spectator* which produced information that severely challenged the veracity and motives of Ms. Hill. The change in public opinion was apparently effected by nothing more than the media's repeated lionizing of Ms. Hill as the victim-champion of the sexual harassment cause. Feminists and their media friends have apparently succeeded in convincing a generation of American children that the only black man on the Supreme Court is a dirty-minded exploiter of female innocence. They must be very proud of themselves.

Reviewing a spate of books on the Thomas hearings, the influential legal scholar Ronald Dworkin concludes that Ms. Hill "acted out of allegiance not to race or class or sex, but only to humanity and the ideals of law." Of course. Dworkin is critical of those blacks who thought racial solidarity should have prevented Ms. Hill from attacking Justice Thomas. It seems that now that there are so many articulate blacks who dissent from liberal orthodoxies whites need no longer "privilege" what is said by blacks. Put differently, discerning whites will decide which blacks are expressing authentically black views. It is similar to feminist organizations such as NOW saying that they support women in politics,

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meaning women who represent what feminist organizations define as the women's position. Most of the media continue to go along with the practice of talking about "women's organizations," ignoring groups such as Concerned Women of America that have many times the membership of organizations such as NOW.

About the same time as the first anniversary of the Thomas hearings, Randy Daniels was appointed a deputy mayor of New York City. He was forced to withdraw when a Barbara Wood made public her claim that five years earlier he had sexually harassed her on the job. The *New York Times* editorially opined that, since Mayor Dinkins knew about the allegations hours in advance of the appointment, he should never have made it. Daniels is guilty until proven innocent, and in these circumstances there is no way of proving oneself innocent. That is the state of a certain style of tortuously perverted liberalism in our time.

Like Anita Hill, Ms. Wood did not bring formal charges at the time the harassment allegedly took place. They both explain that they wanted to avoid the "humiliation" to which they would have been subjected had they brought charges. Years later, however, they feel free to humiliate and defame the men involved, in the course of which they are turned into celebrities by the putative custodians of women's rights. The new rules of the game, reversing centuries of thought about the nature of justice, dictate that the benefit of the doubt is given to the accuser rather than the accused.

In a feature article on these developments, the *Times* observes: "On the first anniversary of the Thomas-Hill hearings, many advocates for women are pushing for a more nuanced approach to a complex issue. For example, they prefer to acknowledge that there are gradations of offenses—complimenting an employee's outfit is different from pressuring her for sex—and so different ways of responding to those offenses should be available." That is a relief. Telling someone that she (or he) looks nice today is not an "offense" tantamount to rape. It is not necessarily cause for the ruination of a person's reputation and career. A very nuanced approach indeed.

A colleague reports seeing this graffiti in a campus men's room: "P.C. Quandary: Would Clarence Thomas have been guilty of sexual harassment if he had described to Anita Hill the contents of the Robert Mapplethorpe exhibit?" Behind the humor is a serious question. The Mapplethorpe photographs sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts were far more explicitly vulgar than anything that Ms. Hill claims that Justice Thomas told her about a pornographic movie he had supposedly seen. According to a twisted orthodoxy now widespread, the government must fund the public exhibition of materials that it may be a criminal offense to discuss in private.

Nobody should dispute the proposition that unwelcome and persistent sexual innuendoes and advances are to be condemned, especially when they are directed at subordinates on the job. Senator Bob Packwood, for example, would seem to have no excuse—except perhaps that he reasonably expected that feminists whom he served so well on other scores would continue to excuse him on this one.

From time immemorial women have been holding off importunate men, and not a few men have been holding off women (one thinks, for instance, of Joseph and Potiphar's wife). If out of the current confusion comes a higher standard of what constitutes respectful behavior between the sexes, everybody will benefit. At present, however, the confusion is producing pervasive anxiety and what is tantamount to an invitation to extortion. An offense that is entirely in the eye of the accuser and is not subject to reasonable definition simply cannot be fairly adjudicated in public. Most important, the presumption of guilt until proven innocent—especially when innocence cannot be proven—assaults the most elementary idea of justice. Those who would protest injustice have a particular stake in not vitiating the idea of justice.

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WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ "Communitarianism" is in the cultural air. It is a movement of sorts that holds promise, but, as with everything, there are problems, and Christopher Lasch touches on some of them in discussing the communitarian thought of Robert Bellah et al. in *The Good Society.* Lasch writes: "My strongest objection to the communitarian point of view is that it has too little to say about controversial issues like affirmative action, abortion, and family policy. The authors of *The Good Society* assure their readers that they 'do not want to advocate any single form of family life.' It is the 'quality of family life' that matters, in their view, not its structure. But quality and structure are not so easily separable. Common sense tells us that children need both father and mother, that they are devastated by divorce, and that they do not flourish in day care centers. Without minimizing the difficulty of solving the problems that confront

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the family, at least we ought to be able to hold up a standard by which to measure the success or failure of our efforts. We need guidelines, not a general statement of good intentions. If communitarians are serious about what Bellah calls a 'politics of generativity,' they need to address the conditions that are widely believed to make it more difficult than it used to be to raise children. Parents are deeply troubled by the moral climate of permissiveness, by the sex and violence to which children are prematurely exposed, by the moral relativism they encounter in school, and by the devaluation of authority that makes children impatient with any restraints. Much of the opposition to abortion reflects the same kind of concerns, which cannot be addressed simply by taking the position that abortion, like the structure of the family, ought to be a matter of private choice. The privatization of morality is one more indication of the collapse of the community, and a communitarianism that acquiesces in this development, at the same time calling for a public philosophy, cannot expect to be taken very seriously." Writing in response, Bellah explains that his openness to diverse family structures is based on his own experience. His father died when he was a small child, so he was raised in a "one parent family" and thinks maybe he did not turn out too badly. He does not address Lasch's concern about abortion.

■ More than thirty years ago, Lionel Trilling of Columbia wrote about his worries in teaching students modern literature: "I asked them to look into the Abyss, and both dutifully and gladly, they have looked into the Abyss, and the Abyss has greeted them with the grave courtesy of all objects of serious study, saying: 'Interesting am I not? And *exciting*, if you consider how deep I am and what dread beasts lie at my bottom. Have it well in mind that a knowledge of me contributes materially to your being whole, or well-rounded men.' " Trilling worried that academic chatter about the abyss, contrary to the intention of the authors he was having students read, resulted in "the socialization of the anti-social, or the acculturation of the anti-cultural, or the legitimatization of the subversive." Writing in *The American Scholar*, Gertrude Himmelfarb surveys the subsequent development of cleverly ironic "deconstructionisms," devoted to the unbridled expression of "candor and creativity," and exulting in the demystification of "facts" ("facts" always appearing in quotation marks). "And what happens," she asks, "when we look into the abyss and see no real beasts but only a pale reflection of ourselves—of our particular race, class, and gender; or worse yet, when we see only the metaphorical, rhetorical, linguistic, semiotic, figurative simulations of our imaginations? And when, looking at figments so divorced from reality, we are moved to say, 'How interesting, how exciting'? When Nietzsche looked into the abyss, he saw not only real beasts, but the beast in himself. 'He who fights with monsters,' he warned his reader, 'should be careful lest he thereby become a monster. And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee.' This was all too prophetic, for a few years later the abyss did gaze back at him and drew him down into the depths of insanity. Nietzsche is now a darling of the academy. I have seen T-shirts emblazoned with the slogan, 'Nietzsche is Peachy.' Nietzsche, who had no high regard for the academy but did have a highly developed sense of irony, would have enjoyed that sight."

■ Almost twenty-five years ago we were first impressed with the line when attending the funeral of Robert Kennedy at St. Patrick's Cathedral here in New York. In the eulogy, RFK's brother Edward cited a line used by Robert, "Some men see things as they are and say 'Why?' He dreamed things that never were and said 'Why not?' " Now Justice Antonin Scalia comes along and spoils one's appreciation of the statement. Speaking at a Baylor University conference on church-state questions, Scalia noted that the sentiment is lifted from George Bernard Shaw's play *Back to Methuselah*. Shaw's line was: "You see things and you say 'Why?' But I dream things that never were and I say 'Why not?' " It was spoken by the serpent to Eve.

■ *The Nation* tirelessly labors on in its determination to elevate our public discourse. For instance, Christopher Hitchens holds forth on "the leathery old saint" who is the "ghoul of Calcutta," meaning Mother Teresa. It seems that she set up a program for the poor in Haiti when dictator Duvalier was still in control, and in August 1989 she visited Albania when it was still Communist. "Having prostituted herself for the worst of neocolonialism and the worst of Communism, it was an easy and worldly step to the embrace of the worst of capitalism." She embraced the last, we are told, by accepting money from Charles Keating (he of the S&L scandal) when he still had money. Mother Teresa was made a media star by "a British poseur named Malcolm Muggeridge," writes Hitchens, and he deplores "the astonishing, abject credulity of the media in the face of the Mother Teresa fraud." In the career of this "hell bat," he concludes, one sees "yet again the alliance between ostentatious religiosity and the needs of crude secular power." Setting *The Nation* aside, we turn to the account in today's paper of how nasty and mean-spirited is the religious right.

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■ A reader submits some ripe little items that he has plucked from here and there. Lars Wilhelm Boe, president of St. Olaf College until his death in 1942, wrote to Mrs. Hermina Hartig, mother of a student: "In this letter I may speak more frankly to you than to the ordinary mother, because you are a professional woman and I speak therefore to you as man to man." That rural sage, Abe Martin, opined: "We'd all like t'vote fer th'best man, but he's never a candidate." Then this from George Bernard Shaw: "A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul."

■ We see from time to time "The Acceptable Year," a religio-political newsletter edited by Lutheran pastor William Sodt. In a recent issue he averred his great debt to Reinhold Niebuhr and expressed irritation that Niebuhr is also claimed as a mentor by this writer, whom Pr. Sodt seems not to like at all. But then one of his readers wrote in to set the editor straight. He explained that "Niebuhr pioneered the path that Neuhaus trod, from civil rights, anti-war, left-wing Democrat to darling of neoconservatism, theologically and politically." Sodt apologizes for his earlier comment. He says his only excuse for not knowing about Niebuhr's "war mongering" and other conservative sins is that he was otherwise preoccupied and did not read Niebuhr during the 40s, 50s, and 60s. "I had always thought of Niebuhr as a progressive Christian of the left," laments Sodt. But it all turns out happily, with one letter from a reader making up for his ignorance of three decades of Niebuhr's thought. So much for Pr. Sodt's cherished mentor. With a sense of certitude unshaken, he now knows that Niebuhr was as bad as Neuhaus is. This strikes us as an instance of remedial education on the fast track.

■ The Supreme Court of New Jersey has determined that the law is not kosher. The law, in New Jersey and more than twenty other states, has provided for state inspection of kosher food concerns to make sure that their food is made and sold according to Jewish dietary laws. "The regulations may have been designed to assure truth in marketing, but the truths being marketed are, in essence, religious truths," declared the Court. The 4-3 opinion adds that "the regulations do not police the nutritional quality or sanitary purity of kosher food but only its religious purity. In doing so, they create an unconstitutional entanglement of government and religion." The American Civil Liberties Union, wouldn't you know, is pressing to have similar laws struck down in other states. The New Jersey case was brought by a kosher food concern that disputed the state's definition of what is and is not kosher. And indeed there are disputes among rabbis on that question. But then, there are disputes over all the definitions that a state might employ in regulating the sale of anything (and what isn't regulated today?). It would seem that the state should clearly indicate what standard it employs and let purveyors who disagree with that standard advise potential purchasers on why they follow a different standard. The inspection of kosher food may not be one of the great questions facing our culture (although it is a big business, with $30 billion in annual sales). But the implied principle of the New Jersey ruling—that any consideration influenced by religion is beyond the purview of governmental concern—is very troubling indeed. That principle is the flip side of the ACLU's separationist dogma that, wherever government goes, religion must retreat. There are perhaps legal ambiguities in the state inspection of kosher food, but accommodating such ambiguities is precisely the reason for an "accommodationist" reading of "the separation of church and state." The purpose of the First Amendment's religion clause is, after all, the free exercise of religion, and one must really reach to make the case that kosher food inspection infringes upon anyone's religious freedom.

■ The Rev. Jean Mayland of York Minster writes to *The Times* (London) to praise the role of the World Council of Churches in the collapse of Communism. This is too much for Canon Michael Bourdeaux of Keston College and Kent Hill of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, two organizations that rendered heroic service in defending believers who were oppressed under the evil empire. Bourdeaux and Hill respond to Mayland thus: "Sir, Jean Mayland's assertion (letter, July 30) that it was the World Council of Churches, not the present Pope, which was the main source of inspiration for Christians in the Eastern bloc is patently false. Those of us who have for many years lived in or travelled frequently to Moscow encounter daily evidence that the WCC's stock has never been lower, nor has it ever been viewed as a strong defender of human rights or religious freedom. Glastnost-era revelations have proven beyond any serious question that the WCC statements and actions over a period of 25 years consistently ignored or downplayed the persecution inflicted on the Christian community by the Communist authorities. The WCC was viewed internally as a prop for the status quo, not as a harbinger of positive change, let alone a courageous defender of the downtrodden. The world scientific and literary communities were much more effective in defending their own than were their ecumenical Christian counterparts. Those of us who believe in ecumenism have been hardpressed in recent months in Moscow to defend the ideal of true, solidarity-inspiring ecumenism

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against the backdrop of the record of ecumenism in practice which Christians in Eastern Europe have been compelled to witness. Nevertheless, we will persist in our conviction that the world Christian community can do better. But that will not be possible if we fail to tell the truth about the past."

■ One imagines it must be rather enlivening to have J. Budziszewski as a colleague in the Government Department at the University of Texas. That, at least, is the inference drawn from his new book *True Tolerance: Liberalism and the Necessity of Judgment* (Transaction). There is nothing wimpish about Budziszewski's idea of tolerance, as is evident in this bracing passage: "When I say something is a virtue, I do not mean 'my community admires this disposition' any more than I mean merely 'I admire this disposition' (although either statement may happen to be true). Rather I mean 'this disposition really does aid, prompt, focus, inform, and execute the moral choices of those who possess it, instead of clouding them, misleading them, or obstructing their execution; it is an objective good, and helps them toward a right relationship with other objective goods.' If someone objects, 'But we must take people as they *are*,' I agree. But we *are* in need of the virtues. If someone objects, 'But most people admire other traits more than the virtues,' again I agree; in fact, I would say that all of us admire other traits more than the virtues, much of the time or even most of the time. But this only shows the more clearly our need. And if some theoretician opines, 'Morals are a breach of taste; there *are* no objective goods with which we could be brought into right relationship,' I readily admit that the point cannot be proved either way. One must take it on faith. But I will add this: I have never known a theoretician who could not suffer indignation—a *moral* passion. Break into his house and see what happens. For an even faster reaction, contradict him! Scratch a subjectivist and you find a moralist every time. The principle, I think, is plain. Many people are *confused* about the distinction between good and evil, but only those *forget* it who have ceased, altogether, to be human. Human beings are so obsessed with it that they will try to derive moral imperatives even from the proposition that there is no moral knowledge. It is one of our most popular parlor games.

"Here is another way of saying the same thing: Because the virtues concern objective goods and evils, if true tolerance is a virtue at all, then it is a human virtue, not a 'liberal virtue.' Among the virtues incumbent upon everybody, it is merely one the liberal political tradition has made a point of. In passing I should like to stress that as political theorists sometimes do, I use the term 'liberal' to designate this entire tradition, not just its left wing. We are speaking of a mansion of institutions and practices the construction of which began around 1688, and which is now inhabited by Ronald Reagan no less than by Edward Kennedy."

■ Personal secretary to Pope John XXIII for almost ten years, until the Pope's death in 1962, Loris Capovilla, now a retired bishop, has given a remarkable interview to *The Catholic World Report*. There is much of interest, including his explanation of why John XXIII must be viewed as a conservative, but we were especially struck by the following response to the question, "What is your assessment of the Council": "I believe that the Council must be judged on the basis of its documents, not on the basis of newspaper articles or the gossip of the sacristy. If you ask me: 'You: who are you?' I will reply: 'I am a man, a Christian, a priest, a retired bishop, and I find my identity in *Lumen Gentium*.' This was a great ecclesial document, dogmatic; I do not believe there is any disagreement on this in the Church. Why did I say 'as a man'? Because I am part of the People of God, *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter 2. Why did I say 'Christian'? Because I am part of Chapter 4, the laity. Why did I say 'a bishop'? Because I am part of Chapter 3, on the hierarchy. If you ask me: 'But your way of speaking, your humanistic culture, Greco-Latin, Mediterranean, your enlightenment, where does it come from?' And I would reply: 'From *Dei Verbum*: The word of God.' If you ask me: 'How do you pray?' I reply: 'I find my prayer and liturgical guideline in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the document on the liturgy.' If you then say: 'But that document has led to so many errors and excesses,' I reply: 'There will always be things to correct and reform.' Because, when I find myself, for example, listening to a symphony of Beethoven or a fugue of Bach, and then listen to certain songs that are sung in churches today, certainly I am upset. But I think that, within *Sacrosanctum Concilium* there is all the material necessary to indicate to me, how I should pray, how I should administer the sacraments, how I should live this life of religion and piety. And then if you ask me: 'How do you view the things happening in the world, in education, politics, the economy, the law, relations between men and women, the family, and so forth?' I will respond: '*Cum gaudio et spes*, with joy and hope, the title of the fourth Council document.' And you will say: 'Really? Joy at what is happening?' and I will say: 'Yes. Because I am a son of God and whatever happens, I am always at home and joyful. And my hopes are not only the improvement of diplomatic relations here or there. We are not here in order to have the Church triumph. We ask for freedom for the Church, not for victory. Liberty for what? Liberty to serve. And I believe that this is occurring.' "

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■ (The following is an unpaid plug.) Moral Dimensions is based in Saratoga, California, and specializes in "applied natural law ethics." That sounds pretty forbidding, but the group has done some first-rate programs playing on PBS and NPR stations under the title "Crisis in Law." They are in need of funding to expand this venture and those who may be able to help are invited to write Fr. William Lester, S.J., at P.O. Box 3239, Saratoga, CA 95070.

■ From *The Letters of Martin Buber* (Schocken), this is Abraham Joshua Heschel writing to Buber in Jerusalem. The date is November 25, 1938, and Heschel is in Warsaw, having been forced to flee Frankfurt. "I receive much news from Germany. If only I could respond with deeds! Perhaps this plight will teach us something. . . . Concepts are suddenly regaining their unambiguousness—for everyone. Perhaps we can now bury relativism." Half-a-century later the intellectual masters of clever relativisms, led by Richard Rorty's band of liberal ironists, dance on Heschel's grave, and Buber's.

■ The document is titled "The Compleat and Authentick Historie of the Conquest of New Spain," and the author is one who styles himself the Revd. P. Mankowski, MA &c. We cannot vouch for its authenticity, nor, for that matter, for its completeness, but it does usefully put into a nutshell most of what we were told this past year about 1492 and all that. "This year we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the introduction of sherry, syphilis, and variable-rate mortgages to the New World. The natives lived in a bubble of Edenic bliss, gently swaying in rustic hammocks to the music of Palestrina, sipping strawberry daiquiris and feeding delicately on nectarines that dropped unsought into their hands. All of a sudden there was a dreadful quaking and rumbling, and an enormous baby blue clapped-out Pontiac pulled up carrying fourteen males with coarse facial hair and pointy-toed shoes. They imposed the feudal system on the unsuspecting Indians by spray-painting the entire Salic Law on the side of the Temple of Quexacoatl and established haciendas, liquor stores, and bishoprics. The natives were peace-loving vegetarians, but the Spanish liked to lean up against trees picking their teeth with knives and using exclusive language. The principal industry of the colonialists was making lewd remarks at the Indian maidens and exporting the reactions to the mother country in exchange for tattoos of Pope Innocent VIII. Things were bad. Then the Sisters of St. Francis of Mamaroneck empowered the campesinos to set up Christian base communities, day care, and fire-support teams of guerrilla infantry battalions. People came to a new sense of selfhood and are now happily employed as weavers of colorful cotton chasubles and as second basemen. We are all very thankful."

■ Goodness knows, we need all the help we can get, so there is reason to welcome "Lutheran Helps for Medical Dilemmas" by the Rev. Adele Stiles Resmer who works for the church and society office of the ELCA. Along the way, Pr. Resmer alludes to the late Joseph Sittler, a Lutheran theologian of great influence. Resmer writes: "In the end faithful folk must decide what decisions/choices fit them, that is, what makes sense given their historical situation, biblical, theological, and philosophical understandings. Having taken all of the above into account they must then make their best guess. Here I'm eluding [sic] to Joe Sittler who helpfully reminds us that after you gather all the information for decisions, theological and otherwise, finally your decision should be offered up to God, who will sort out the right or wrongness of the decision and, if necessary, offer forgiveness." If we got her right, the message is: Do what seems right for you, and let God worry about it. Readers may disagree as to whether that eludes the title's promise of helps in medical dilemmas.

■ In Toronto, a nurse named Scott Mataya administered a lethal dose of potassium chloride to Joseph Saunder, 78, because the latter began to choke and Mataya was "distraught." The court handed down a suspended sentence and barred Mataya from nursing for life. An Arthur W. Frank of the University of Calgary writes in the *Christian Century* that Mataya probably did the right thing, adding, "My sense of compassion for both Scott Mataya and myself is that, if I were dying, I would welcome him as my nurse." Frank invokes the example of Jesus and the woman taken in adultery. "[Jesus] seems to recognize that no society takes its nominal proscription against killing as inclusive of all instances. . . . The only general principle is compassion; beyond that, nothing but people acting in what the Toronto court called 'unusually stressful situations.' " Frank acknowledges that ethicists make distinctions between administering drugs to relieve pain and injecting to kill, but in the actual situation of suffering, he writes, "I doubt that any of these distinctions mean much." We can try to draw lines, says Frank, but they are always changing. "I hope that if some day my own caregivers have to step over one line or another, they may go the direction Scott Mataya chose," he concludes. When in doubt, choose death, says Mr. Frank. More remarkable, he appears to deny the possibility, even the desirability, of distinguishing between caring and killing. Most remarkable, the editors of the *Christian Century* obviously think this brief for the compassion that kills is a

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contribution to current discussions about ethics relative to death and dying.

■ Here, in its entirety, a correction printed in *The Lutheran* (ELCA): "The Eastern North Dakota Synod did not adopt the position that 'homosexual acts along with fornication and adultery are all sins.' The resolution was tabled."

■ In the name of "preventing AIDS," very dramatic changes in public school sex education seemed to be having a free run during the last two years or so. The great debate in New York, for instance, has been over whether fifth-graders must be given graphically illustrated lessons in oral and anal sex, heterosexual and homosexual. That is next to the dispute about whether gay activists serving as "counselors" in sex education programs should be required to say that abstinence is a good thing. Those who think New York an irrelevant aberration are reminded that at least fifty other urban school districts are following "the New York model." But now a reaction, in the very best sense of that term, seems to be setting in. For several years a handful of persistent, even heroic, folk, coordinated by Msgr. John Woolsey of the Archdiocese, braved overwhelming and vicious opposition in pointing out the availability of more sane approaches to teaching about human sexuality. Beginning this fall in New York, more and more black and Hispanic parents (the school system has relatively few whites) have joined in public protest against the schemes of the educational establishment. "Not With My Children You Don't!" they are saying in a hundred different ways. And more solid materials are becoming available that challenge the scientific and educational presuppositions of the more extreme programs, while also giving concrete guidance on alternatives. We have mentioned some of these materials before, but take this occasion to alert readers to *AIDS and Adolescents* by Linda Thayer, a project of the Boston Archdiocese. Ms. Thayer teaches biology in a Boston high school and knows of what she writes. (Available for $3 from Office of Community Relations, 2121 Commonwealth Avenue, Brighton, MA 02135, or from St. Paul Book and Media Centers throughout the U.S. and Canada.)

■ "I think ethics is becoming a commodity, and that's becoming a problem. While we like to think about the ethical consequences of new technologies, we have never thought about the ethical consequences of having an ethics industry," says Lawrence Gostin, executive director of the American Society of Law and Medicine. Bioethics is indeed booming, writes Michael Schrage for the *Los Angeles Times*, as hospitals, state health commissions, government research projects, and labor unions all sense the need to cover their backsides by hiring experts who can testify in court that they did "the ethical thing." Although ethicists are commanding six-figure salaries, "ethical advice is always going to be cheaper than medical treatments," writes Schrage. "For that reason alone, the job market prospects for tomorrow's bioethicists look a lot healthier than [those of] the people they advise."

■ The very disengaged *New York* magazine carried this book note: "*Jesus*, by A. N. Wilson. The biographer of Tolstoy and C. S. Lewis takes on the much-mythologized figure at the center of a popular religion and seeks to dispel many of the myths that have collected about him. W.W. Norton. 320 pages. $22.95." Surely you remember the Jesus movement?

■ British television has this comedy series *Spitting Image*, and it recently featured a rubber puppet of a hippy-style Jesus. The puppet has been withdrawn after vociferous expressions of outrage from viewers. From Muslim viewers. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association of the UK pointed out that Islam reveres Jesus and the puppet was a "gross and grotesque misrepresentation." Those responsible, said the Muslim statement, "should be severely punished." Producer Bill Dare has not been punished, but he promises that the puppet will not reappear. "We did not know the Muslims were upset," he said. "People sometimes ask why we don't have a puppet of Mohammed but we don't poke fun at minorities in this country—they are vulnerable enough as it is." In the UK the notion persists that Christians are not a minority. Mr. Dare says he discussed the offending program with Church of England leaders who thought it was "innocuous." Iqbal Saccrani of the Muslim committee expressed the view that Anglican clergy would be heartened by the leadership provided by British Muslims in protesting blasphemy. "I am sure the Church will join us," he said. Mr. Dare no doubt has a better feel for the C of E. Among the keepers of ecclesiastical proprieties, unplumbable depths of indifference are passed off as that famous British unflappability.

■ *Journeys* is a newsletter published by the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Among the alumni notes in a recent issue is a photo of two beaming women posing cheek by jowl with the explanation: "Mary Cronin ('85) and Bonnie Jackman celebrated their union in a commitment ceremony May 9. Joined by their families and friends, they exchanged rings and vows in a service led by a friend. Mary teaches kindergarten in Boston." A novice wrote *National Jesuit News* inquiring about Jesuit etiquette for lesbian nuptials. For instance, is a wedding gift appropriate? No answer to date.

■ When the American Bar Association this past August endorsed abortion on demand, the

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credibility of its claim to be a nonpolitical organization collapsed completely. Clarke Forsythe and Kevin J. Todd, attorneys with the Chicago-based Americans United for Life, have sent out an appeal to pro-life lawyers across the country. "In light of ABA policy makers' willful indifference to arguments for collegiality and inclusiveness . . . we believe the time has come to disassociate ourselves from an ABA that will aggressively commit funds, personnel, and its name to pro-abortion advocacy—to lobbying Congress and state legislatures in favor of absolute abortion-rights laws and to filing *amicus curiae* briefs in federal and state courts in support of an unmodified *Roe v. Wade*. To date, over 3,000 attorneys have cancelled their memberships in the ABA to protest the abortion advocacy position. Uncounted others have allowed their memberships to lapse. We encourage you to resign; to send a letter to the ABA explaining the reason for your action; and, if you permitted your membership to lapse without comment, to send an explanatory letter to the ABA. Although recent actions of the ABA indicate that it will likely remain stone deaf to our concerns, the Association may be able to hear the echoes in its coffers and reconsider its position if adequate numbers of members resign." In addition, explorations are underway toward establishing an alternative and genuinely non-political national bar association. For more information write Mr. Forsythe at Americans United for Life, 343 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL 60604.

■ The new president of Planned Parenthood of America, replacing Faye Wattleton who is going into the talk show business, is Pamela J. Maraldo. Speaking of her religion, Ms. Maraldo says, "Like most Catholics, as is shown by one national survey after another, I believe in the use of contraception and am pro-choice. I go to church on Sunday but do not subscribe to many of the basic tenets of the Church. That does not mean I am any less a Catholic." In other words, Catholicism is what I say it is. In a consumer culture of customized religion, it seems everybody has a right to define Catholicism except the Pope. One is reminded of the perhaps apocryphal story of Clare Boothe Luce who, in audience with Pius XII, waxed enthusiastic about the glories of Catholicism. As she was departing, the Pope was heard to say, "But, Mrs. Luce, I'm a Catholic, too." With respect to the discussions of what it means to be a Catholic, we would not be surprised if John Paul II might sometimes want to raise the same objection.

■ We are a little late in bringing it to our readers' attention, but then the editors were late in getting it to us. But here at last is the first issue of *Pro Ecclesia: A Journal of Catholic and Evangelical Theology*. It completely fulfills its promise. The quarterly is published by a theology center run by Lutherans in Northfield, Minn., but it is thoroughly ecumenical in participation and purpose. The aim is to promote theological scholarship and discussion that is resolutely committed to the Great Tradition shared by all Christians who would be orthodox, and to advancing the visible unity of the Church. Among those associated with this venture and familiar to our readers are Carl Braaten, Robert Jenson, Robert Benne, Avery Dulles, Stanley Hauerwas, Mark Noll, Thomas Oden, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Philip Turner, Robin Darling Young, and this writer. A year's subscription is $25 and it should be sent to *Pro Ecclesia*, Box 327, Delhi, NY 13753. This handsome journal of theology fills a gap that has needed filling for a very long time.

■ It is possible that another sponsor might come forward, but as of this writing it appears that there may be no St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City this year. Held for more than two hundred years, the parade is beyond doubt the oldest and most notable celebration in the life of the city. The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) has decided that it will no longer sponsor the parade because existing and threatened law suits jeopardize the organization's various charitable programs. The difficulties began when the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization (ILGO) demanded that it be allowed to march in the parade and the AOH said no. The difficulties became insurmountable when Mayor David Dinkins threw his support behind ILGO. Keep in mind that the St. Patrick's Day Parade is a Catholic event, sponsored by a Catholic organization to celebrate the patron saint of Ireland and New York. Gay activists who aggressively proclaim their rejection of church teaching have no place in it. That, at least, is the way the Hibernians see it. Not so with the Mayor's human rights commission. The commission has ruled that the parade is a "secular" event, and therefore there is no religious exemption from laws that forbid discrimination against homosexuals. Barring a new sponsor, March 17 will witness a perfect exemplification of the naked public square—for the first time in two centuries, Fifth Avenue without a St. Patrick's Parade. The Dinkins' Doctrine is relentless: public=secular. Put differently, religion in public life is a contradiction in terms. If there is no parade, gay and lesbian activists, together with their mayor, will no doubt draw satisfaction from having demonstrated their power by silencing a vibrant expression of pluralism in the life of the city. Oh yes, they will say it was necessary because "we live in a pluralistic society." In their dictionary, pluralism means that you do it their way or you

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don't do it at all. We still hope that, somehow, there will be a parade—and that it will be the Catholic parade of the last two centuries. But, however this turns out, the role played by the Mayor and his political allies will be remembered. And not only by the Irish.

■ We took note a while back of *Newsweek*'s disingenuous apologia for pop music that celebrates killing cops and engaging in other socially dubious behavior. According to the editors, as best we can understand their argument, when blacks kill white people they are really doing whites a service by alerting them to their responsibility for the social conditions that engender black rage. And so forth. But now the music industry has gone too far for the editors of *Newsweek*. It seems that a nineteen-year-old named Buju Banton has put out "Boom Bye Bye" in which he proposes shooting homosexuals. "And the beat of bigotry goes on," *Newsweek* opines in tones most censorious. The editors also get in a dig at religion, noting that Banton claims that homosexuality "runs contrary to my religious beliefs." It is possible, but it seems unlikely, that in the view of *Newsweek* the killing of homosexuals would be as excusable as the killing of cops, if it were done for nonreligious reasons.

■ According to Father Fred Kammer, S.J., who is its new president, Catholic Charities is "the nation's largest private human service network." Private? Surely he means voluntary or nongovernmental. There is nothing in the least "private" about Catholic Charities. Kammer's apparent assumption that "public" means "governmental" is evident in his thoroughly statist recommendations for mending social ills. "I am proud," says Kammer, "that Catholic Charities is the largest. I am not proud that we are a growth industry." He then goes on to promote a laundry list of public policies by which government can take over from voluntary action. Included is an expansion of federal low-income housing programs—programs that by now are almost unanimously acknowledged as having had disastrous consequences for the urban poor. Apparently the word has not yet reached those in charge at Catholic Charities. To judge by this report in *catholic trends*, it seems that Fr. Kammer has little use for the doctrine of "subsidiarity" in Catholic social teaching—the doctrine that decisions about meeting human needs should, as much as possible, be voluntary and in the hands of those most immediately affected. At the beginning of his tenure as president, we warmly recommend to Fr. Kammer a careful reading of the 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, in which John Paul II sets forth the humane alternatives to statist social policies. This writer would even be so bold as to urge upon the leadership of Catholic Charities the elaboration of the Pope's proposals in his new book, *Doing Well and Doing Good*. But that may be expecting too much. The dreary fact is that—among Catholics, Protestants, and Jews alike—many of those in charge of charitable agencies continue to denigrate "charity" and favor its replacement by statist "solutions" that swell government bureaucracy and lock the needy ever more tightly into patterns of dependency and powerlessness.

■ Consider the plight of Dan Maguire. Having left behind his solemn vows as a priest, he has for years been a lay theologian teaching at Marquette University in Milwaukee. He married Marjorie, also a theologian, and together they wrote a book arguing that abortion is a moral choice for Catholics. Over the years, Dan Maguire has been a star speaker for Catholics for Free Choice and groups advocating the moral legitimacy of homosexuality. With Mr. Maguire, it seems, almost anything goes. But now he has divorced Marjorie and married another woman. The first Mrs. Maguire is very unhappy about this. She has left theology and become a lawyer. She goes around to meetings where Dan Maguire is speaking and takes the microphone to call him an "adulterer," a "spiritual rapist," and other rude things. Mr. Maguire went to court and got an injunction to keep the first Mrs. Maguire from disrupting his speaking engagements with "inappropriate and obscene behavior." The judge stipulated, however, that Mrs. Maguire has every right to express her views if the events include a place for comments by the audience. Dan Maguire, a fervent civil libertarian, has long been prominent among those Catholics calling for an open Church in which everybody should have their say. Well, not exactly everybody, it now appears.

■ Originally an Anglican monthly, the *New Oxford Review* has in recent years become assertively Roman Catholic. The editors have now done a readership survey and discovered that a little over 72 percent are Catholic, the rest being a mix of moderate to liberal Protestant, with 3.9 percent evangelical Protestant, 1.5 percent Eastern Orthodox, and 0.5 percent Jewish. They asked their readers which two religious periodicals they "read avidly." We were pleased to note that FIRST THINGS came out on top, followed by *America*, *Commonweal*, and *Crisis*. (Only 2.4 percent named the liberal mainstream magazine, *Christian Century*.) With a readership more balanced between Protestants (54 percent) and Catholics (40 percent), with our intense engagement of Jewish-Christian questions, and with almost three times the number of subscribers of *New Oxford Review*, we might plausibly contend that FIRST THINGS

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reflects the mainstream of religious publishing. But, since we are robustly skeptical of most things mainstream, we won't.

■ Readers of a certain age will remember the World Council of Churches. Despite rumors to the contrary, the Geneva-based ecumenical anger factory has not gone out of business. After the 1992 mob action in Los Angeles, the WCC announced that it was launching a project to study, wouldn't you know it, systemic racism in the United States. The council funded something called the Kairos/USA network. It takes its name from the Kairos manifesto issued some years ago in South Africa. That exercise in liberation theology declared that apartheid was the necessary product of the nexus between racism and capitalist exploitation. To attack the alleged racial apartheid of American society, the WCC called on such unreconstructed leftists as Jim Wallis of *Sojourners* and Yvonne Delk of the United Church of Christ to lead Kairos/USA. The plan was to deliver themselves of an American "kairos document" on Columbus Day, 1992, the 500th anniversary of the putative genocide launched by the conquest of the Americas. The project has been delayed, however, because of the lack of support from those whose plight the document was to address, namely, minorities. A preliminary report from the organizers concludes that the lack of support from blacks, Native Americans, and others "indicates how deep the separation is between peoples and that the national justice movement is indeed deeply divided racially." An appropriate word for "the national justice movement" would seem to be, Physician heal thyself. An even more appropriate caution is that Kairos/USA is premised upon a misdiagnosis of the problem. Entrenched poverty and associated thuggeries in a society that is demonstrably more racially tolerant than ever before are attributable not to racism but to social policies and pathologies that will not be remedied by easy rhetoric about American apartheid. Coming to terms with this reality, however, would require a revolution in the mind-set of a WCC that is mired in the revolutionary slogans of an unlamented past.

■ Until 1985, according to Gallup's *emerging trends*, Americans rated clergy number one for honesty and ethical standards. Since then, clergy come in second to pharmacists (clergy 54 percent, pharmacists 66 percent). College teachers are even with dentists at 50 percent, while journalists (27 percent), lawyers (18 percent), and Congressmen (11 percent) are viewed with considerable suspicion. At least in some cases you can't even fool most of the people some of the time. The poor car salesman is at the bottom of the heap (5 percent). That is probably unfair since, unlike the other fields, he is rated on one very specific function, selling you that car. Galluping on to other findings in this issue of *emerging trends*, there is more bad news for the United Methodists. Asked to name what should be the church's top priority, only 26 percent say "preaching the Gospel," and less than one percent name reaching out for new members. Thirty-five percent say the top priority should be "serving the community." The good news—although it is bad news for the General Board for Prophetic Action to Establish the Kingdom of God on Earth—is that only 5 percent say that "changing society" should be the top priority.

■ There is a man-bites-dog quality to this one. Churches usually resist government regulation, but the Canadian Council of Churches (which includes both Catholics and oldline Protestants) is insisting that the Canadian government continue tight regulation of religious broadcasting, including the ban on religiously owned radio and television stations. Christian stations, the Council says, could "invite divisiveness and discord." The Council reminds the government that "religion is sometimes used to incite hatred rather than harmony." The Council is saying, in effect, "Please regulate us lest we run amok." As you might imagine, it is non-Council evangelicals and fundamentalists who want to start stations. Speaking for the Catholics and oldline Protestants, Jim Hodgson of the Council admits that they fear competition with Vision-TV, a "multifaith" channel now on cable. In the field of electronic communications, the Canadian Council of Churches looks at the competition and concludes it had better call in the government to shut them down.

■ One last chance to apply to attend the second two-week seminar on "The Free Society and *Centesimus Annus*" in Liechtenstein next July. The same faculty: Rocco Buttiglione, Michael Novak, Richard John Neuhaus, George Weigel. Fellowships are available for ten American graduate students. Send curriculum vitae and 300-word essay on liberty to Derek Cross, American Enterprise Institute, 1150 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20036. Application deadline is the end of February.

■ There is a paradox, says Suzanne Gordon, that has not been grasped by feminists who denigrate the routine, invisible, and often tedious work of caring for others—for children and elderly parents, for example. Writing in the self-confessed liberal journal, *The American Prospect*, Gordon observes: "Paradoxically, only when voluntary caregiving attains greater esteem is society likely to devote greater resources to those caregiving activities that should be professionalized and paid. Only then are

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men more likely to bear their fair burden of care, both in the home and in the helping professions." Gordon continues: "Feminists cannot simultaneously applaud men who share caregiving in the home and helping professions and look down on women who freely choose to work in the home as mothers or who become nurses, teachers, child care providers, or social workers. If feminists do not honor the full range of the choices women make, how can they ask men to change? If work in the family wraps one in a haze of domesticity and enrolls one in a cult of domesticity that blunts all talents, why would any man volunteer for this social lobotomy?" Nobody can go through life, contends Gordon, without being aware of their need for care and their obligation to care. To say that women should not do this work, that being a stockbroker who makes cold calls to convince strangers to buy the latest offering of IBM is more ennobling than diapering a baby's bottom, is no solution to the problems that feminists deplore. "Indeed," concludes Gordon, "it is a recipe for the marginalization of feminism."

■ A number of Christian groups in the Cambridge area sponsor "The Harvard Veritas Forum." The promotional literature includes a little reflection on the official symbol of Harvard, a shield bearing the one word "Veritas." It was not always so. The original symbol had "Veritas Christo et Ecclesiae"—Truth for Christ and Church. That, in the original, was followed by John 8: "And Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.'" In addition, in the original, the shield also exhibited three books, two opened and one turned face down, acknowledging the limits of human reason. Today Harvard's symbol makes no reference to Christ and the Church, nor to John 8. In addition, the third book is now opened, suggesting that we know it all, or soon will. Today Harvard proclaims just "Veritas." Veritas *for* nothing, which can mean Veritas for anything, which, as human experience instructs us, can turn out to be the death of Veritas.

■ This from the help-wanted columns of the *Star-Ledger* of Newark, N.J.: "ACTIVIST Fight environmental racism. Build a cleaner tomorrow. Careers avail, good pay & bnfts. Call 201-783-5030." Remember the good old days when activist meant protesting the system?

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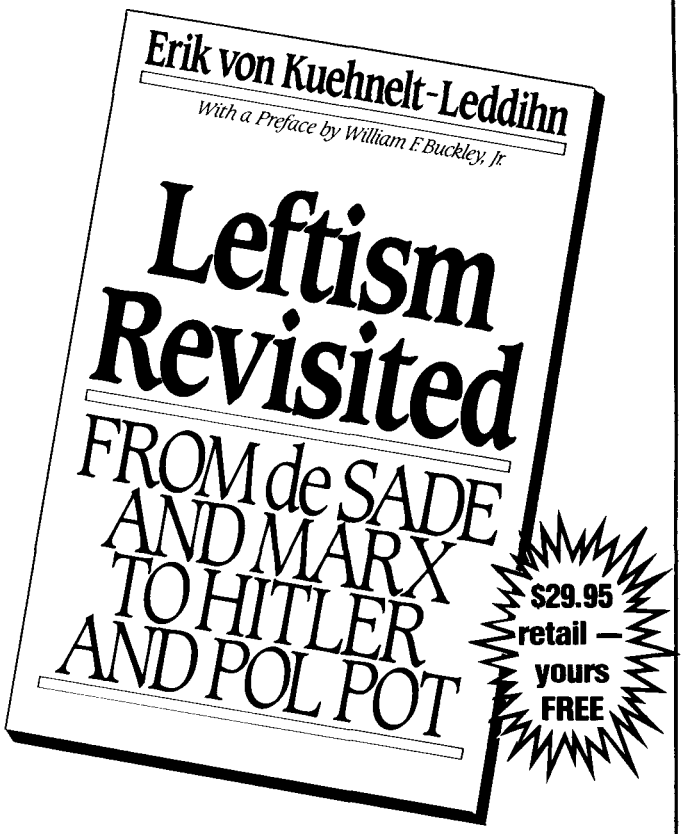
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In a year most would like to forget, FORBES puts up some unforgettable numbers. *We're #1 in advertising pages among all magazines.** More importantly, the number of FORBES' high-quality readers continues to grow. Why? Increasing interest in FORBES' gutsy, ground-breaking business editorial. The humor and fun of our FYI supplement. Plus the anticipation of our new technology supplement, ASAP. No wonder readers have sent our circulation rate base to a record-breaking 750,000. In tough times, hard-hitting, relevant and innovative reporting has its place. At the top.

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*Source: NY Times 12/21/92 — Forbes Magazine 60 Fifth Ave. N.Y., NY 10011

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